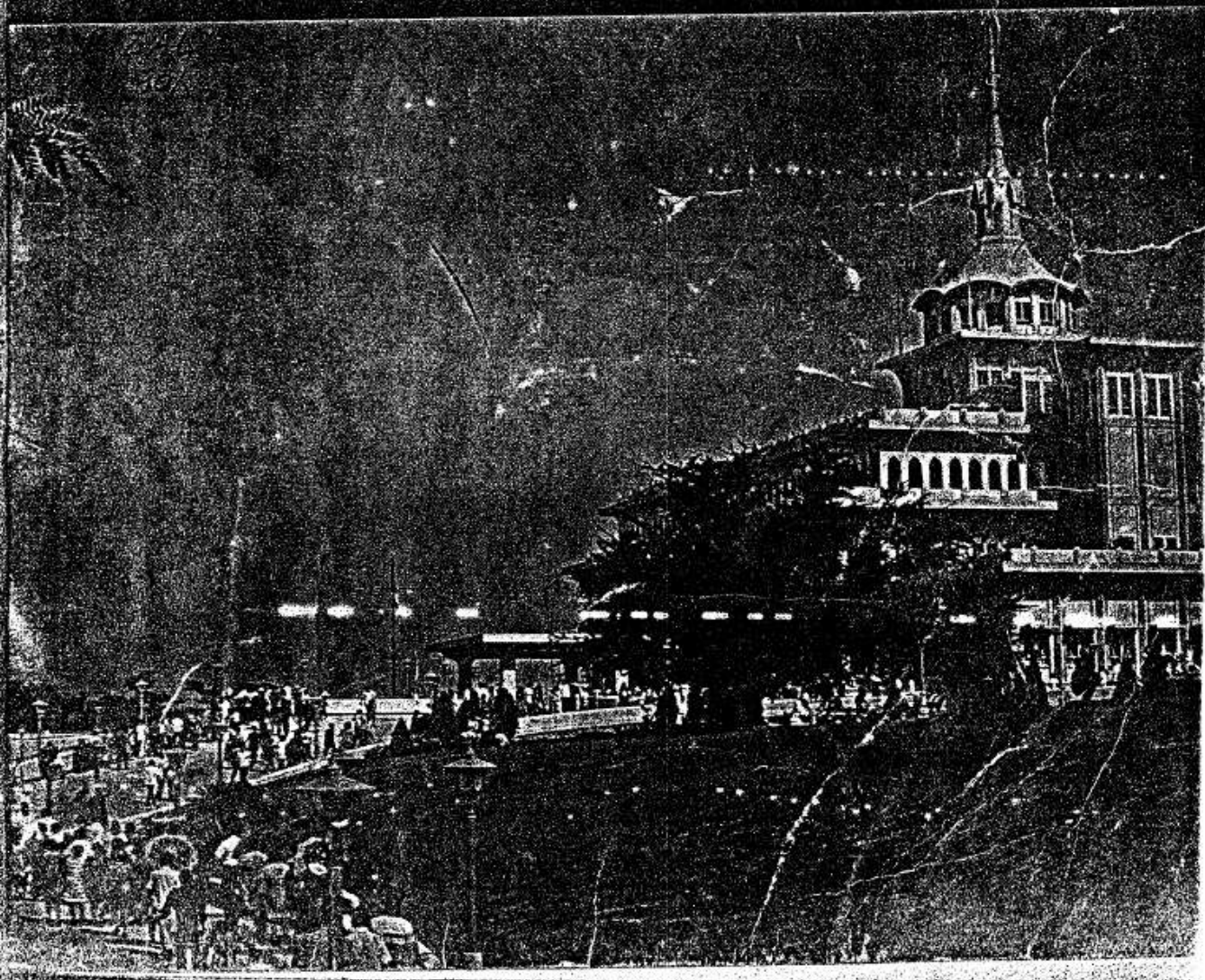


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THIS IS THE
IGLESIA NI CRISTO
'CHURCH OF CHRIST'

IGLESIA NI CRISTO
QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES



INTRODUCTION

In 1914, a young Filipino by the name of Felix Manalo, 28 (married), begun preaching the Church of Christ in a place called the Sitio of Punta in the District of Sta. Ana in the City of Manila, Philippines. This event, which marked the beginning of a new religious movement in the history of what is known as the Christian world, occurred concurrently with the outbreak of the First World War in Europe on July 27, 1914.

It is the fulfillment of the many prophecies of God written in the Bible concerning His Last Messenger in the person of Felix Manalo and the re-establishment of the Church of Christ or Iglesia ni Cristo in the Philippines.

This Church was officially registered in the Philippine Government on July 27, 1914.

At the early stage of this Church, it had encountered countless obstacles, persecutions, derisions and malefaction. But with the help of God it has emerged triumphant and has flourished to the acme of its present glorious stature and posture, palpably evidenced by the increase of converts that joined the innumerable caravan in the terrestrial sojourn of God's people in the Christian era and also by the mushrooming Houses of Worship through the breadth and length of the Archipelago.

A few of these Houses of Worship are pictured in the following pages.

Yet, the prophecies of God concerning this Church do not end here, but even go beyond the Philippine shores as far as the propagation of the faith is concerned. The salvific mission of this Church has up to the end of the world.



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FELIX Y. MANALO: GOD'S LAST MESSENGER

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FELIX Y. MANALO (1886-1963), was born in Barrio Calzada, Tagig, in Rizal province, southern Luzon, in the Philippines on May 10, 1886 — at a time when the country was yet in the clutches of Spanish colonialism and when Roman Catholicism was still considered the state religion. He was raised in the Catholic faith by his parents, Mariano Ysagun and Bonifacia Manalo. (It was some time after his mother's death that he decided on his mother's name over his father's name. He grieved over the death of his mother for whom he had a great affection. Thus for sentimental reasons and for expressing his reverence, he adopted her name, Manalo.) He began acquiring his education from the barrio school under the tutelage of a "maestrong Cario" (a teacher called Cario).

He worked as herdboys, was later apprenticed to his uncle in the latter's photography studio and, sometime in 1904, opened a hat shop in Parañaque, Rizal. By then, the Spanish conquistadores had already yielded the Islands to the Americans and the Roman Catholic Church was then beginning to be challenged by different Protestant sects which the Americans brought with them.

Manalo began to entertain his first doubt in the Catholic teachings when, sometime in 1904, he witnessed a public debate between a

Catholic priest and a Protestant pastor in Parañaque, Rizal. The Protestant pastor evidently prevailed and gained Manalo's profound interest.

Not knowing that his life had a singular pattern designed by God for him to follow, as were the lives of God's messengers before him, namely Moses and Apostle Paul, he drifted from one religion to another. That year, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and attended the classes given by that sect in the Methodist Theological Seminary wherein he eventually became an evangelist.

Thus began a seemingly endless search for the true religion — a search that led Manalo to join one Protestant sect after another — scrutinizing every doctrine and comparing them with the Biblical precepts. In 1907, he joined the Presbyterian Church wherein he became a pastor after attending the Union Theological Seminary.

The manner of baptizing by immersion by the Christian Mission attracted Manalo's attention and in 1910, he joined the missionaries and later became an evangelist. He married Tomasa Sereneo of Paco, Manila who died soon after giving birth to their son, Gerardo.

In 1911, he joined the Seventh-Day Adventists wherein he also became a pastor. Then

Manalo remarried. His second wife was Honorata de Guzman of Sta. Cruz, Manila. The couple were both active in the Church's activities, Felix Manalo as a minister and Honorata, a deaconess. But then, after pondering on the Adventists' persistent observance of Sabbath, Manalo found it unscriptural. He abandoned the Adventist Church and returned to his hat shop.

Dissatisfied with the doctrines and practices of the then existing religions, Manalo severed himself from all of them. Then he transferred his business and domicile to Pasay City and also opened a barber shop. Although he was frequently visited by his former colleagues in the Adventist Church who tried to bring him back to the fold, Manalo did not waver. He totally lost faith in the established religions. He began to associate himself with atheists and free-thinkers obviously to examine their conviction which he found false and irrational, too.

He found out that wrong interpretations of the Bible caused both the atheists' disbelief and the diversity of the doctrines of different religions.

In his search for the truth, Manalo resolved to undertake a thorough examination of the doctrines of the different religions. That was in early 1913. He closeted himself in his room, and, to the utter apprehension of his wife, did not emerge until two days and three nights later, within which period he painstakingly assayed the different tenets of different religions in the light of the teachings of the Bible. And that which was vague and obscure to him became crystal clear.

He gained the insight that religion or man's way back to God must be fully in accordance with the will of God contained in the Bible, and that he was being sent to preach the true religion so that God may bring near



Felix Y. Manalo in one of the Church's public evangelical rallies.

His righteousness to men in these last days.

Stimulated by Apostle James' admonition in his epistle (James 4:17) that "...to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin," Manalo decided to preach the Gospel. This was the mission which he carried out through thick and thin until he died on April 12, 1963, full of years and fruitful achievements.

PHILIPPINA

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO IN THE PHILIPPINES

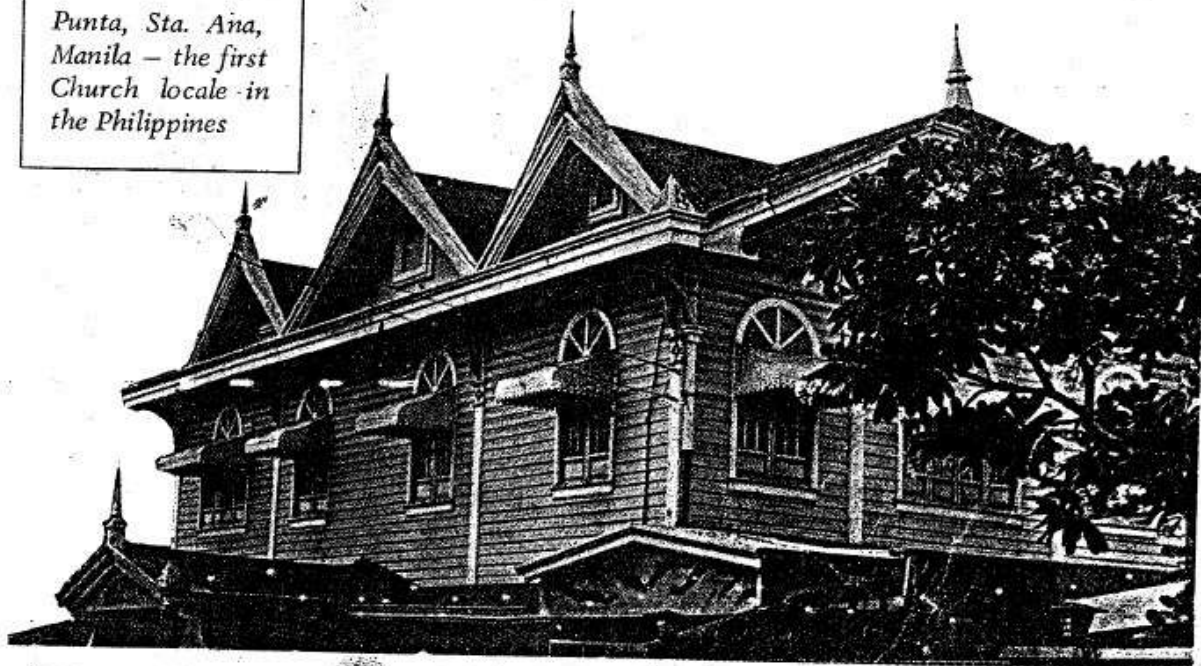
In an early month of 1914, Felix Manalo left with his wife, Honorata, for Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila to begin preaching about the Church of Christ. There he started with four or five listeners in a small room at the workers' quarters of Atlantic Gulf and Pacific Company of Manila, Incorporated. As the listeners began to grow in number the nightly religious meetings were moved out in the open. Soon, the first converts were baptized in the nearby Pasig River. They formed the first locale congregation of the Iglesia ni Cristo in the Philippines.

A few months later, the Church in Punta

gained more converts and Manalo decided to propagate the Church in other places. He left the small congregation in the care of Federico Inocencio, one of the first converts, and Atanacio Morte, the head deacon. He headed for Tipas with his wife and infant daughter, Pilar, to bring the mission of salvation to his townmates.

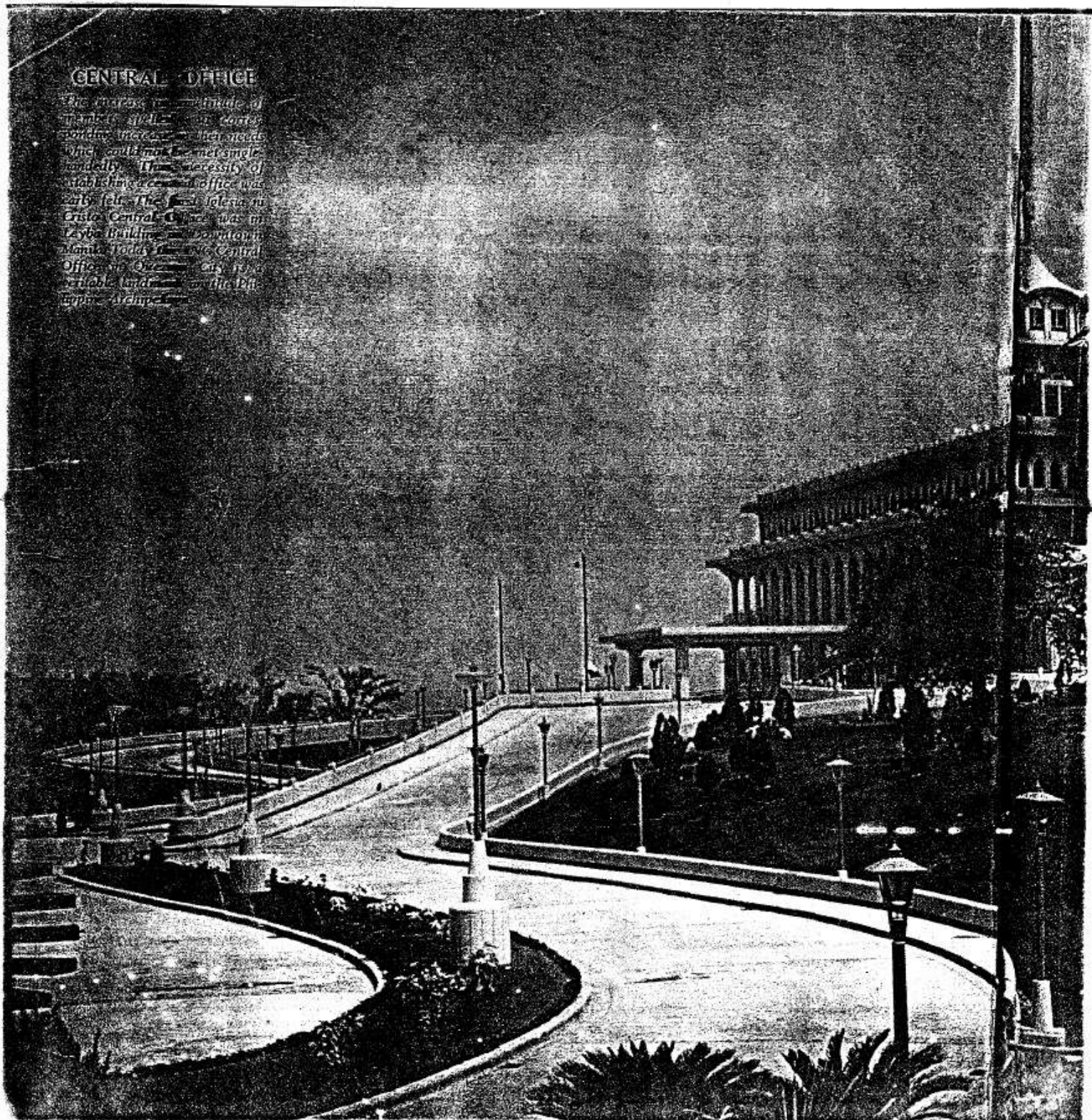
In his hometown, he met stiff persecutions. His townmates could hardly believe that so familiar a figure as he could bring no less than the message of salvation to them. They derided him. Yet some of the more determined detractors were later converted. Among these

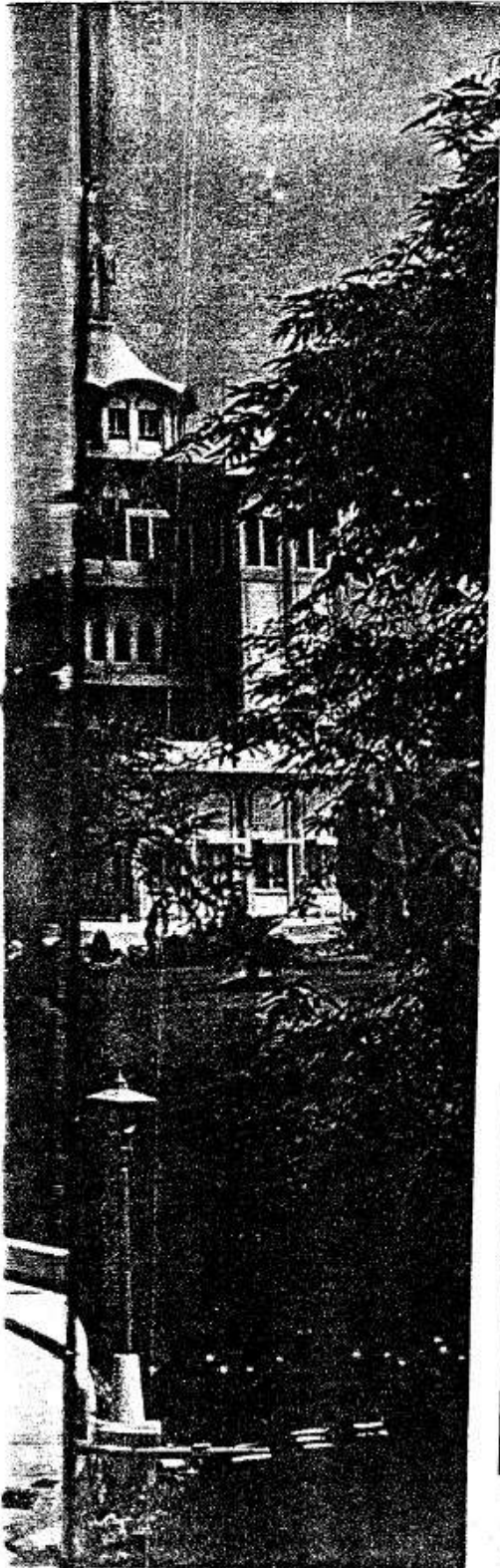
*Punta, Sta. Ana,
Manila — the first
Church locale in
the Philippines*



CENTRAL OFFICE

The major problem of Manila is the lack of a central office building. The needs of the city could not be met single-handedly. The necessity of establishing a central office was early felt. The first idea in 1910 Central Office was in the Lyceum Building. In 1911, Manila, the Central Office was moved to the new building. The Central Office is now in a new building. The Central Office is now in a new building. The Central Office is now in a new building.





were Justino Casanova, pastor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance and Norberto Asuncion who both became ministers of the Iglesia ni Cristo.

Manalo, working with Atty. Juan Natividad, filed the Article of Incorporation of the Church with the government. On July 27, 1914 the Iglesia ni Cristo was officially registered with the Philippine Government. Thus the prophetic revelation contained in the Bible was fulfilled.

After the rainy month, the Church's work of propagation was launched in the town of Pateros and then in the town of Pasig. It was an exacting task and soon Manalo began to feel the effects of his rigorous pace. He began to lose weight but with sheer determination he nursed himself back to health.

The propagation of the Church began in Tondo, Manila in the closing months of 1915. It began in the house of Quintin Rivera as a modest start and blossomed into full-scale religious rallies from one vacant lot to another, attracting both sympathizers and critics alike.

Manalo met various oppositions and persecutions from entrenched religious establishments such as the Catholic and Protestant forces. But he remained undaunted. The Church's followers multiplied. And so arose the need for ministers.

Manalo conducted Bible classes for the Ministry. Soon, some student members were ordained on whose assistance Mañalo could now depend in looking after the spiritual needs of the growing Church.

Trusted ministers were assigned to pioneer in the work of propagating the faith in the areas surrounding Manila. The Church branched out to the provinces in Central Luzon. As early as 1924, the Iglesia ni Cristo had as many as 45 locale congregations. In 1937 the

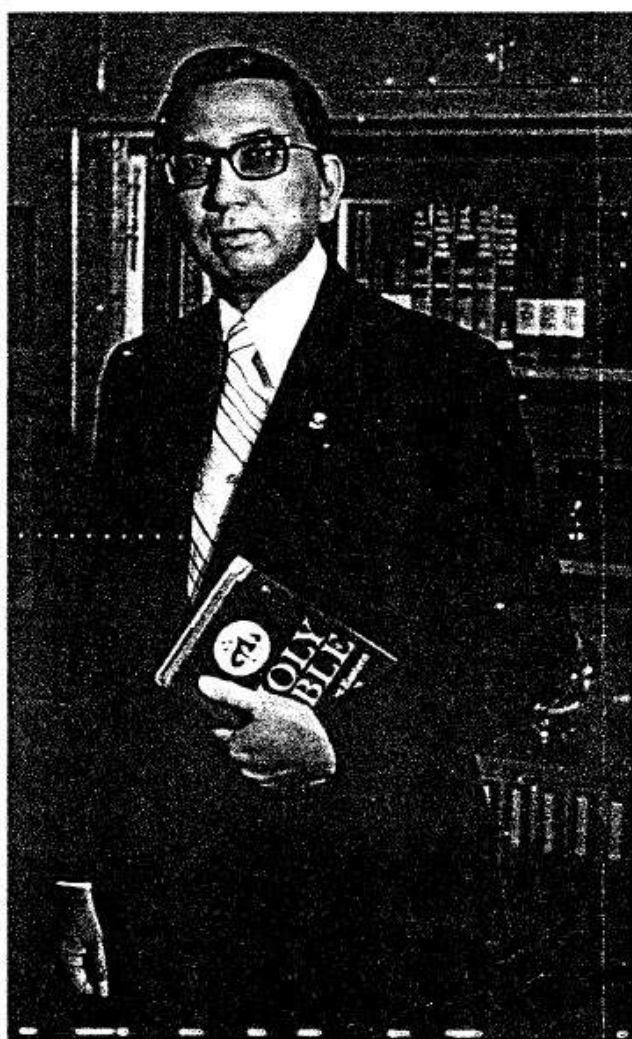
Church began propagating in the Visayas when Manalo sent Alipio Apolonio to pioneer in preaching the Church in Cebu, whence it hopped from one Visayan Island to another. Before the Second World War broke out, the Church had gone as far north as Ilocos Norte and as far south as Cotabato in the Island of Mindanao.

In February, 1939, the first issue of *Pasugo* came out. The Tagalog magazine aimed to disseminate the doctrines of the Church. Publication of this monthly periodical temporarily stopped during the war years and reappeared in January 1951.

During the wartime period, when the Japanese Imperial Army occupied the Philippines, the mission of salvation continued in spite of the reign of bombs and threats. While other religious groups compromised, out of fear, with the Japanese and succumbed to the machinations of the enemy, the Iglesia ni Cristo continued to hold worship services, continued to hold missionary campaigns, and continued to minister to the spiritual needs of the brethren. Under stress and pressure, the ministerial force led by Felix Manalo persisted in propagating the truth and overseeing the need of the brethren. The Iglesia ni Cristo was not hindered from flourishing even during the perilous times of the Second World War.

While the other religions failed miserably in their task of propagation, the Iglesia ni Cristo gained thousands of converts. And so after the war the makeshift houses of worship in almost all locales could not hold the congregation anymore.

In 1948 the Church began constructing a concrete house of worship in Washington Street, Sampaloc, Manila. It was the beginning of a pious undertaking; the resurgence of big houses of worship that became landmarks



Eraño G. Manalo
Executive Minister

through the breadth and length of the Archipelago. It was far from the expectation of many people because the majority of the Church members are numbered among the poor. Because of its force, this Church has

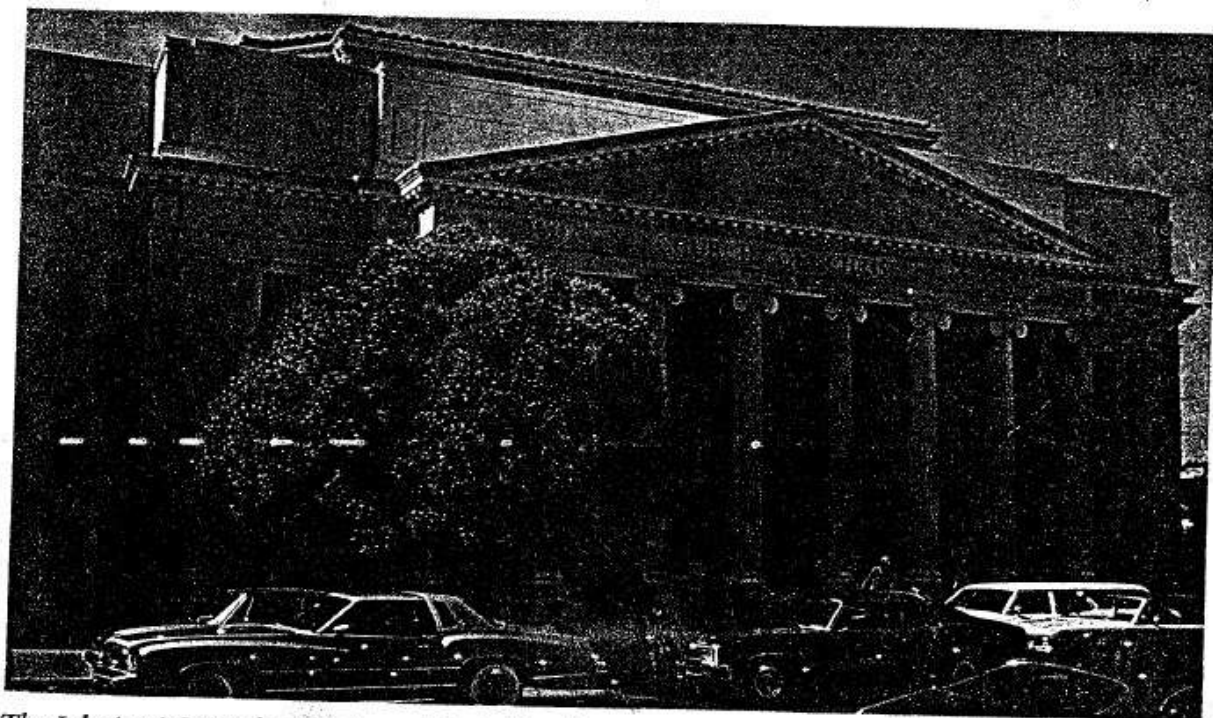
gained the respect even of those who disagree with it in many things. They could not help but recognize the right and authority of this Church because of its complete unity not only in doctrine but also in all its endeavors.

When God willed that Felix Manalo should rest after almost fifty years as leader of the Church of Christ, Eraño G. Manalo (the fifth of Felix's six children) took over. The Church has remained strong and united. There has been a steady increase in membership as well as in the number of chapels built. Local congregations of the Church have been established abroad, as in the mainland of the United States of America, in Canada, England, Germany, Hawaii, Guam, and Hongkong.

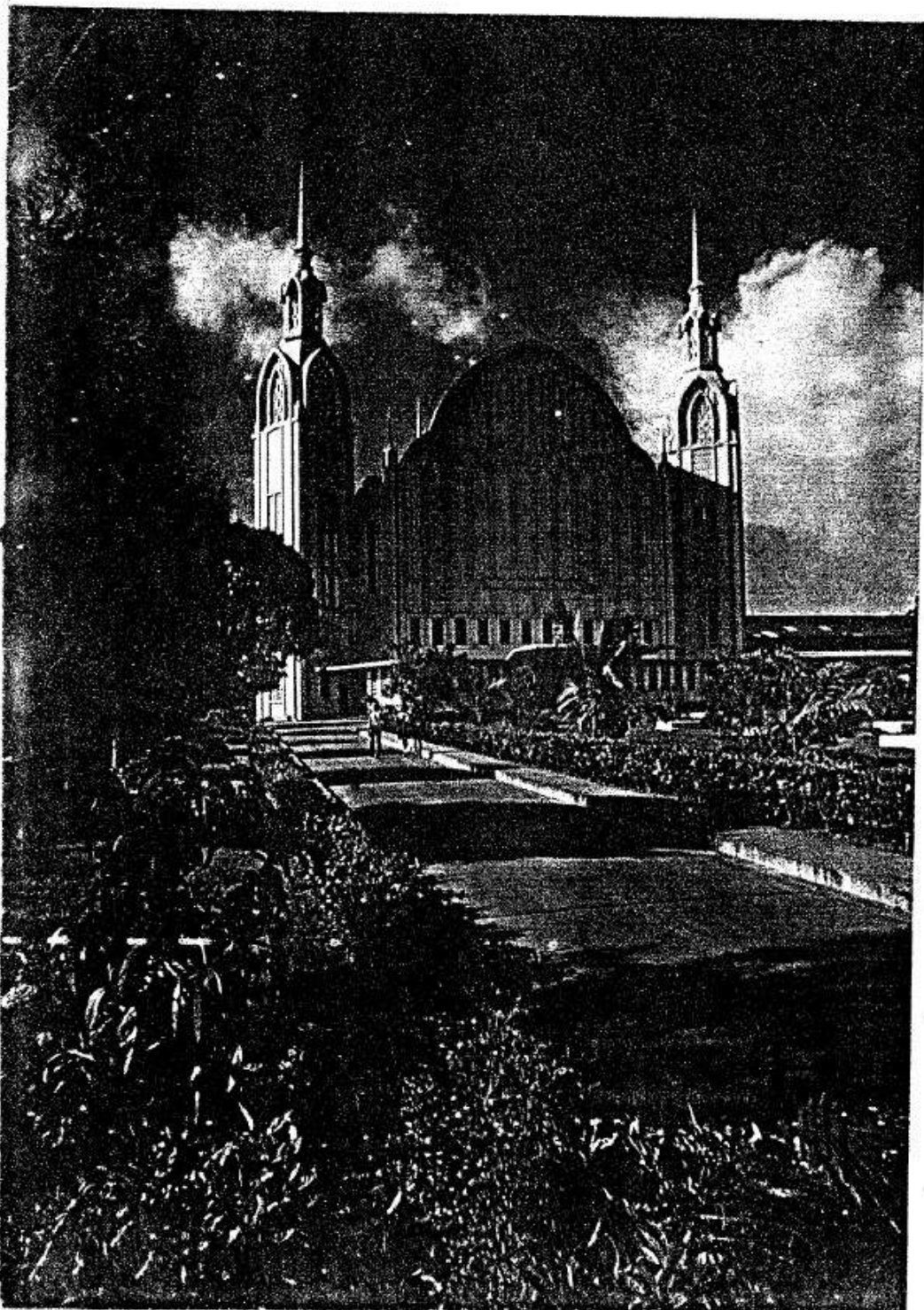
God promised that when the Church of

Christ shall have been glorified in the East, there would arise people in the West who shall be made members of this Church: "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun . . ." (Is. 59:19, RSV). If the mission of salvation transcended the international date-line, this is in fulfillment of God's will.

Indeed, the Church of Christ will continue to march towards a certain degree of progress which God has designed for her, and if her posture and stature has caught the attention of the world, God wants this to be known by all: "That men may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it" (Is. 41:20, RSV).



The Iglesia ni Cristo house of worship in San Francisco, California, USA.



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THE BIBLE: SOLE BASIS AND AUTHORITY

The Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ) believes that the words of God are written in the Bible; that when the Bible speaks, God Himself speaks. So, when the Bible is silent, the Iglesia ni Cristo is silent too — for it recognizes no other basis and authority in serving God except the Bible.

The Iglesia ni Cristo believes that the Bible is given by inspiration of God (II Tim. 3:16) and that it is the sole repository of God's words written down by His commissioned servants (Dan. 12:4) who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Pet. 1:20-21) and were therefore guided accordingly on what to write and what not to write (Rev. 10:4).

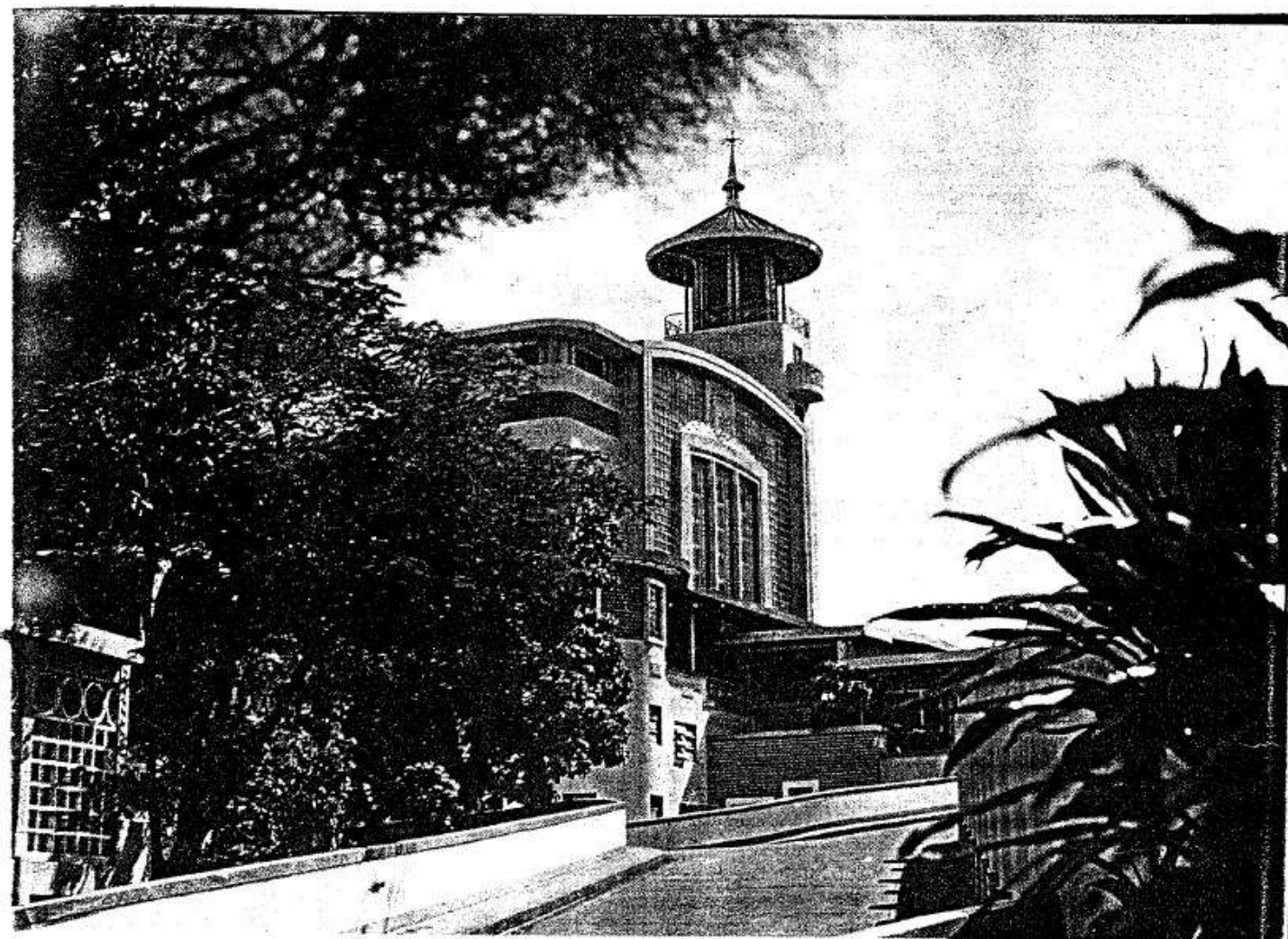
The Bible consists of 66 books written within a period of 1600 years (1500 B.C. — 100 A.D.). The writers of the old and the new testaments were not contemporaries, yet the

Bible contains no contradiction. Indeed, it has a very striking unity.

Unlike any other book, the Bible contains God's words that declare the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done (Is. 46:9-10; James 4:14). Whatever God has foretold in the Bible has been markedly fulfilled (e.g., Dan. 12:4).

The Bible is this Church's sole authority on doctrines and practices in serving and worshipping God because "no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate" (Is. 34:16). And besides, it alone is "able to make thee wise unto salvation . . . profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:15-17).





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BELIEF IN ONE GOD

The Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ) believes in the true God as He revealed Himself and as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles through the Holy Scriptures.

The true God is the Creator. As it is written in the Book of Nehemiah: "Thou art the Lord, thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them" (Neh. 9:6, RSV). He alone "made all things" (Is. 44:24, RSV).

He alone is God (Ps. 86:10). "For I am God," He declares, "and there is no other" (Is. 45:21-22; Is. 46:9-10; Dt. 32:39, RSV). This amply disproves the Catholic belief in the Trinity which asserts, sans biblical proofs, that God is one in three persons, and each person is distinct from the other persons, but each person is God and equal to the other persons as God.

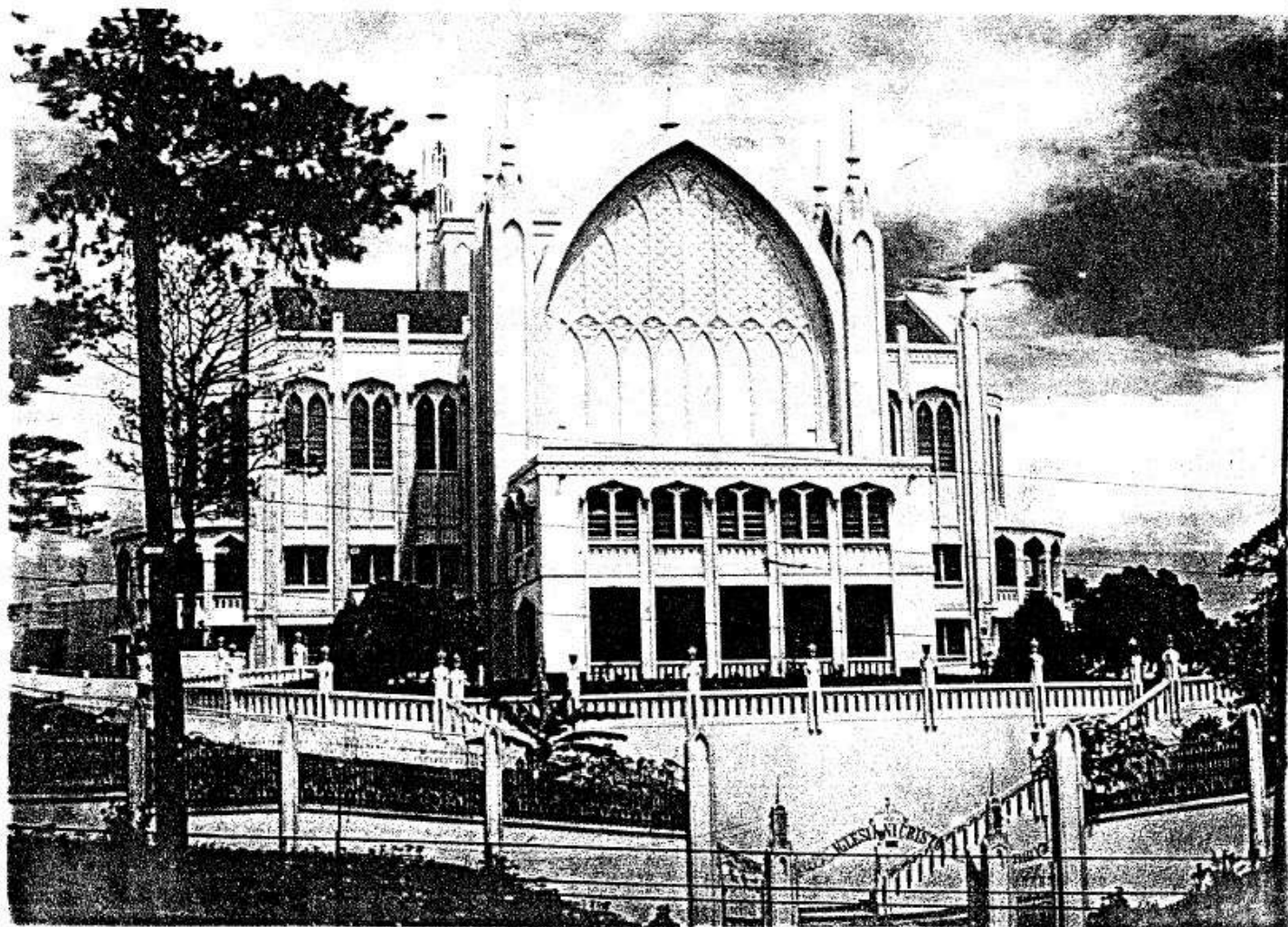
God is unchangeable. "For I the Lord do not change," He said (Mal. 3:6, RSV). He did not, and will not, become man or anything. He is immutable; contrary to the belief of those who teach that Christ is God that became flesh. Christ is man and not God. And God is not man. "For I am God," He emphasized, "and not man" (Hos. 11:9).

Christ — in His prayer to the Father — said, "And this is eternal life that they might know thee the only true God..." (John 17:1, 3).

Apostle Paul echoed this teaching in his first letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 8, Verse 6: "For us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things and for whom we exist..." (RSV).

Likewise, for the members of the Iglesia ni Cristo, there is but one true God, the Father, who should be loved with "all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind" (Luke 10:27).

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MAN'S DUTY TO SERVE GOD

All men are created by God. The Bible says, "It is He that made us, and we are His" (Psalms 100:3, RSV).

God has a sublime purpose in creating man. Singled out among all God's creation, man is, by God's gracious and divine purpose, destined to render unto Him service and worship (Eph. 1:4-5).

To serve the Lord God is to keep or obey His commandments with all one's heart and all one's soul (Dt. 10:12-13).

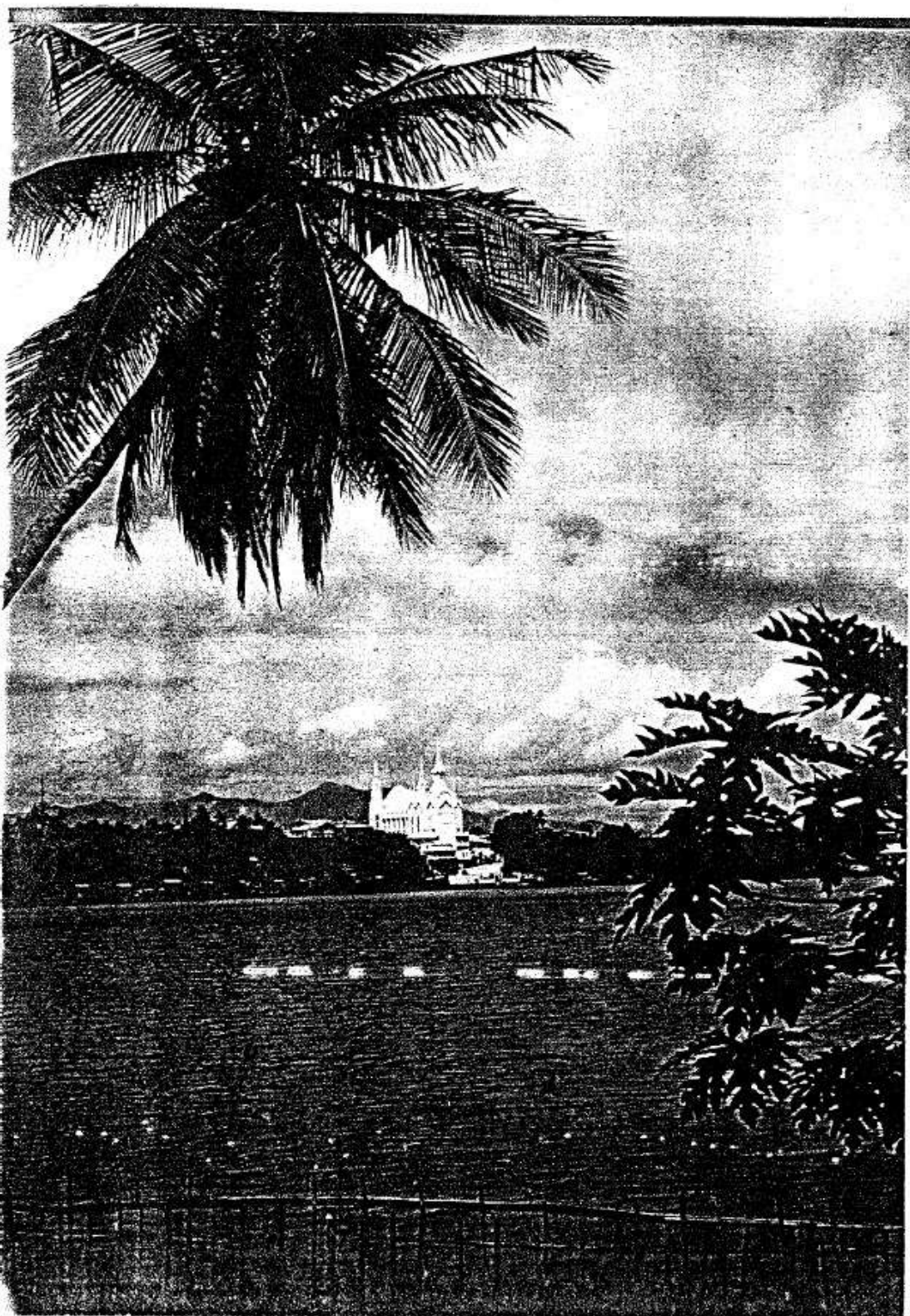
The Lord Jesus Christ had shown us that it is really man's duty and obligation to obey the commands of God. He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4, RSV).

Indeed to fear God and to keep His commandments is the whole duty of man

(Ec. 12:13). As it is written, "By this we may be sure that we know Him; if we keep His commandments" (1 John 2:3, RSV).

God is perfectly within His right to demand such obedience to His commands because He is man's Maker and Creator. He is Lord, so He must be obeyed (Psalms 100:3; Ec. 12:13). All men are under obligation to subject themselves to all the commandments and conditions designed and laid down by God for their observance.

It is man's duty to serve God. In return, God will bless "the bread and water" (symbolic of man's livelihood) of those who serve Him (Ex. 23:25). To them, the goodness and mercy of God will abide (Psalms 23:6). And above all the blessings of salvation on judgment day and life everlasting.



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THE RIGHT TO DEIFY GOD

When sin came into the world through one man (Adam) the peaceful relationship between God and man was disrupted (Rom. 5:12). Man was separated from God because of sin, thereby losing his right to serve and deify God (Is. 59:2). And this was not all. Man is even held accountable to God on the Day of Judgment (Rom. 3:19; Heb. 9:27).

Yet God, to manifest His continuing love and concern for all mankind — as was His righteous purpose of creation — issued a summon to all men to return to Him and be restored to the right position with Him (Mal. 3:7).

However, it is not within man's power to effect his return to God. It was God Himself who provided the means by which man could return to Him: the precious Blood of Jesus Christ which served as atonement for man's sin (Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:20-21). Man must first possess the right before he could serve and deify God. He must first be cleansed and purified by the Blood of Christ before he can serve the living God because without the shedding of Blood there is no forgiveness of sin (Heb. 9:14, 22).

Yearly, the Church of Christ members commemorate the Last or Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ because He said, "Do this

in remembrance of me." (Lk. 22:19). Apostle Paul also said thus: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (I Cor. 11:26).

God's law requires that every man shall suffer death for his own sin (Dt. 24:16). Christ, as Savior, took upon Himself what the divine justice demands by creating the one new man (consisting of Him as the Head and the Church that He built as the Body) thus, assuming accountability for the sins of the redeemed (Eph. 2:15).

The members of the Church of Christ



which our Lord Jesus Christ purchased with His own Blood (Acts 20:28) are the only ones benefited by His death. To them alone, the right to serve and deify God is restored.



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OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Iglesia ni Cristo believes in the Jesus taught by the Bible, the Jesus Whom God has made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).

The Lord Jesus Christ has unique attributes which cannot be found in any other human being.

Christ is the God-appointed Savior of mankind. Such exclusive office is the very purpose for which Jesus Christ was born. He is the Savior and Apostle Peter made it known to all that "there is salvation in no one else" for His name bears the salvific grace of heaven (Acts 4:12).

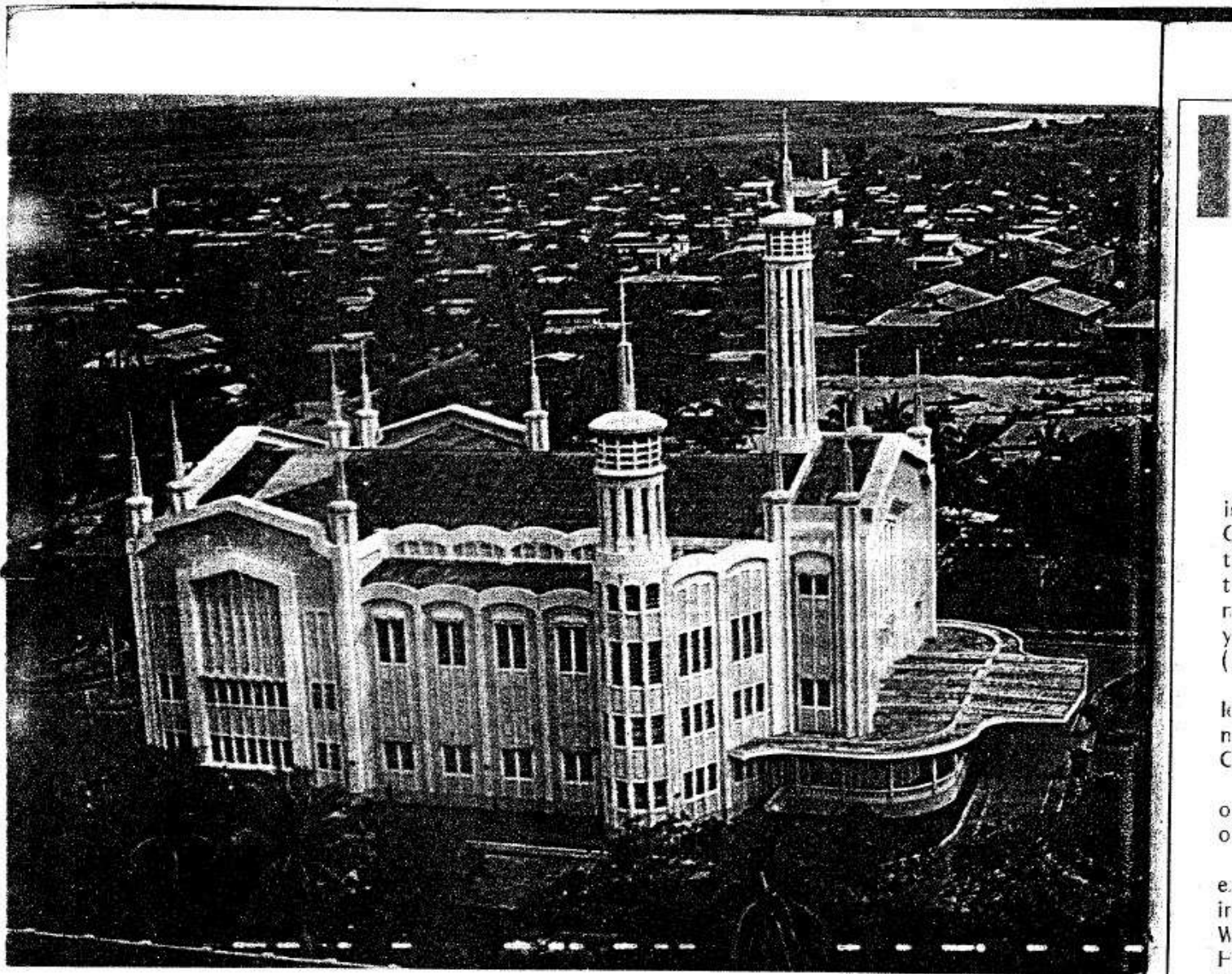
He alone mediates for those whom He shall save. "For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5).

Not only is Christ appointed by God as

Savior and Mediator. He is to be revered by all. "But in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord" (1 Pet. 3:15). "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue, confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11). All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him (Mt. 28:18).

Christ is the only man Who is sinless, as Apostle Peter testifies, "He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips" (1 Pet. 2:22, RSV).

He is the only advocate of the sinner. "If any one does sin," writes Apostle John, "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1, RSV).



*Cabanatuan City,
Nueva Ecija*

CHRIST'S TRUE STATE OF BEING

Despite His uniqueness when compared to all other man, Christ remains man in His state of being. Christ is never the true God. He is a true man. And there is no better testimony regarding His state of being than that which He said of Himself. He said, "But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God . . ." (John 8:40).

Apostle Paul attested to this in his first letter to Timothy. He wrote that the one mediator between God and men is "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

When Apostle Matthew gave his account of the birth of Christ, he said that in the womb of Mary was a child (Mt. 1:18) — not a god.

Christ, since birth, was subjected to the experiences and circumstances of human life, inherent in all men (sin, of course, excluded). When He fasted forty days and forty nights, He became hungry (Mt. 4:2). Once, when He was in a boat with His Apostles, He was asleep (Mt. 8:24). In one of His travels, He sat down beside the well of Jacob, for He was tired (Jn. 4:6). He wept when He heard the news that Lazarus, His friend, died (Jn. 11:35). And on the cross, He cried with agony saying "My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:34). Then He died (Mt. 27:50).

The true God has no beginning nor is He a son of man (Psalms 90:2; Numbers 23:19). His power and strength knows no limitation for He is the Almighty God and with Whom nothing is impossible (Gen. 17:1; Luke 1:37). He is Spirit (John 4:24). He does not grow weary (Is. 40:28) and does not sleep (Ps. 121:4). The true God is immortal (1 Tim. 1:17).

So Christ could not be God. Neither could He be God that became man nor could He be both true God and true man at the same time. Christ is a man. But God is not man (Hosea 11:9). Therefore Christ is not God.

Christ Himself proved demonstratively that He is not God when He reappeared to His Apostles after His resurrection. "See my hands," He said, "and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Lk 24:39, RSV).

Lest anyone be misled to believe that Christ is God because all things are put in subjection to Him, so Apostle Paul plainly states that "When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God maybe everything to every one" (1 Cor. 15:27-28, RSV).

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CHRIST SAVES

The Almighty God is an Omniscient God. Even before the creation of the world He knew everything that will happen: "the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done" (Is. 46:10). He knew, for instance, even before creation, that man will sin. And so prior to the creation of the world, Christ was already in His mind (1 Pet. 1:20). He planned to create Christ in due time so that through Him (Christ) man will be released from the shackle of His law concerning the sinners.

Just as God had anticipated, man sinned. The first man, Adam transgressed His law. God, expectedly, was displeased. He pronounced His verdict right then and there in the Garden of Eden: Death for the sinner (Gen. 3:19). And "as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned" (Rom. 5:12, RSV).

Nevertheless, God also pronounced His promised for a Redeemer — the seed of the

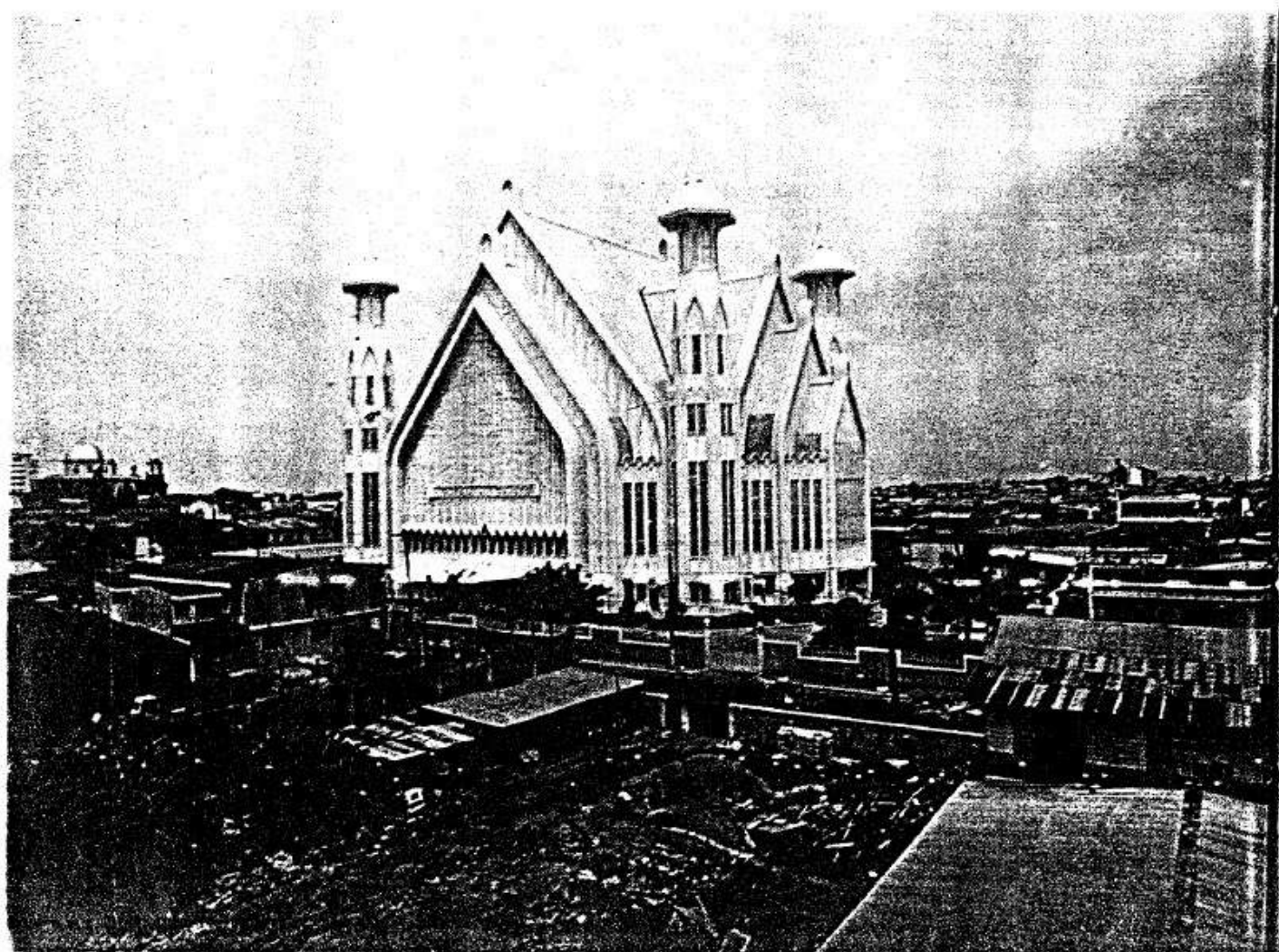
woman (Gen. 3:15), which is also the seed of Abraham (Gen. 17:7; Gal. 3:16), which reflects His love and compassion to man. He does not want him to perish. He wants to save him. So He promised a Redeemer, a Savior.

That promise was fulfilled when, thousands of years later, Mary gave birth to her first born: Jesus. That significant event was recorded in the Gospel. An angel of the Lord was recorded to have said to the shepherds (who were to see the new-born child): "I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:7-11, RSV).

"For God so loved the world," Apostle John writes, "that he gave his only Son, that whoever believe in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." (John 3:16-17, RSV).

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ONE NEW MAN

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To silence the law of God concerning the sinners without violating it, Christ created in Himself "one new man in place of the two" (Eph. 2:15, RSV). The one new man is composed of Christ as Head and the Church as His Body (Col. 1:18).

The reasoning is altogether sound, as logical as it is valid: "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior" (Eph. 5:23, RSV).

In so creating the Church as His Body, Christ automatically assumes the responsibility of answering for the sins of those who constitute His Body or those who are "individually members of it" (I Cor. 12:27).

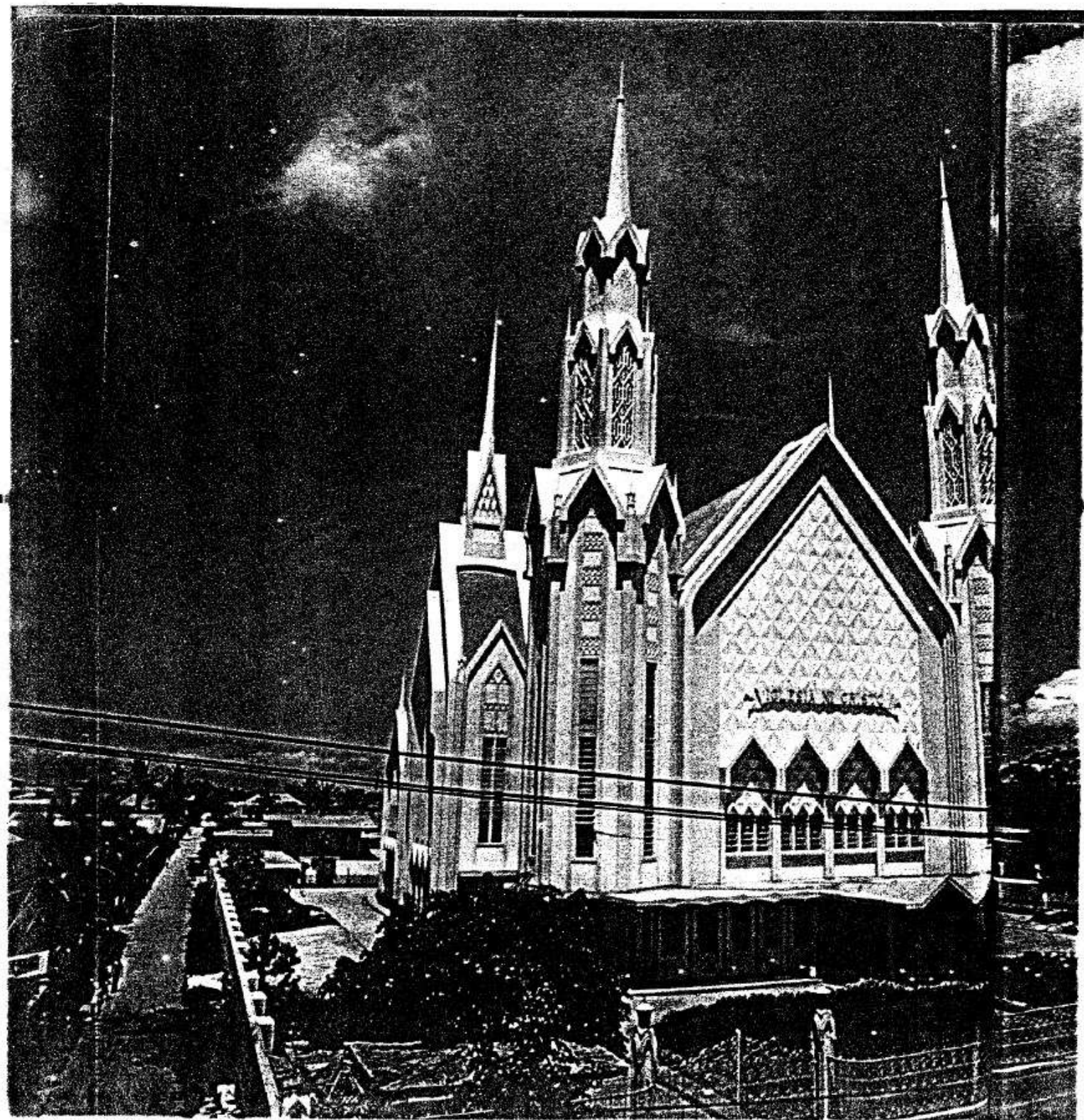
For His Church's sake, God made Him to be sin who knew no sin so that in Him the Church might become the righteousness of God (II Cor. 5:21).

Accordingly, Christ died on the cross for

His Church. And His death signifies the redemption only of the members of His Church, and not of anybody else (Eph. 5:25).

Christ died for the Church which He recognizes as His own body. It is called by His name (Acts 15:17-18). It is His Church, so understandably it is called Church of Christ. Christ and His Church compose the "one new man" which Christ created in Himself "so making peace." Thus He reconciles "us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end" (Eph. 2:16, RSV).

Evidently the place of reconciliation is the Church of Christ. To be reconciled to God and be saved, one must become a member thereof. Unless he becomes a part of the Church of Christ or Body of Christ he is not embraced by the redemptive death of Christ; he is imperiled by the impending penalty for the sinners (John 8:24). He, in short, is doomed.





THE PLAN OF SALVATION

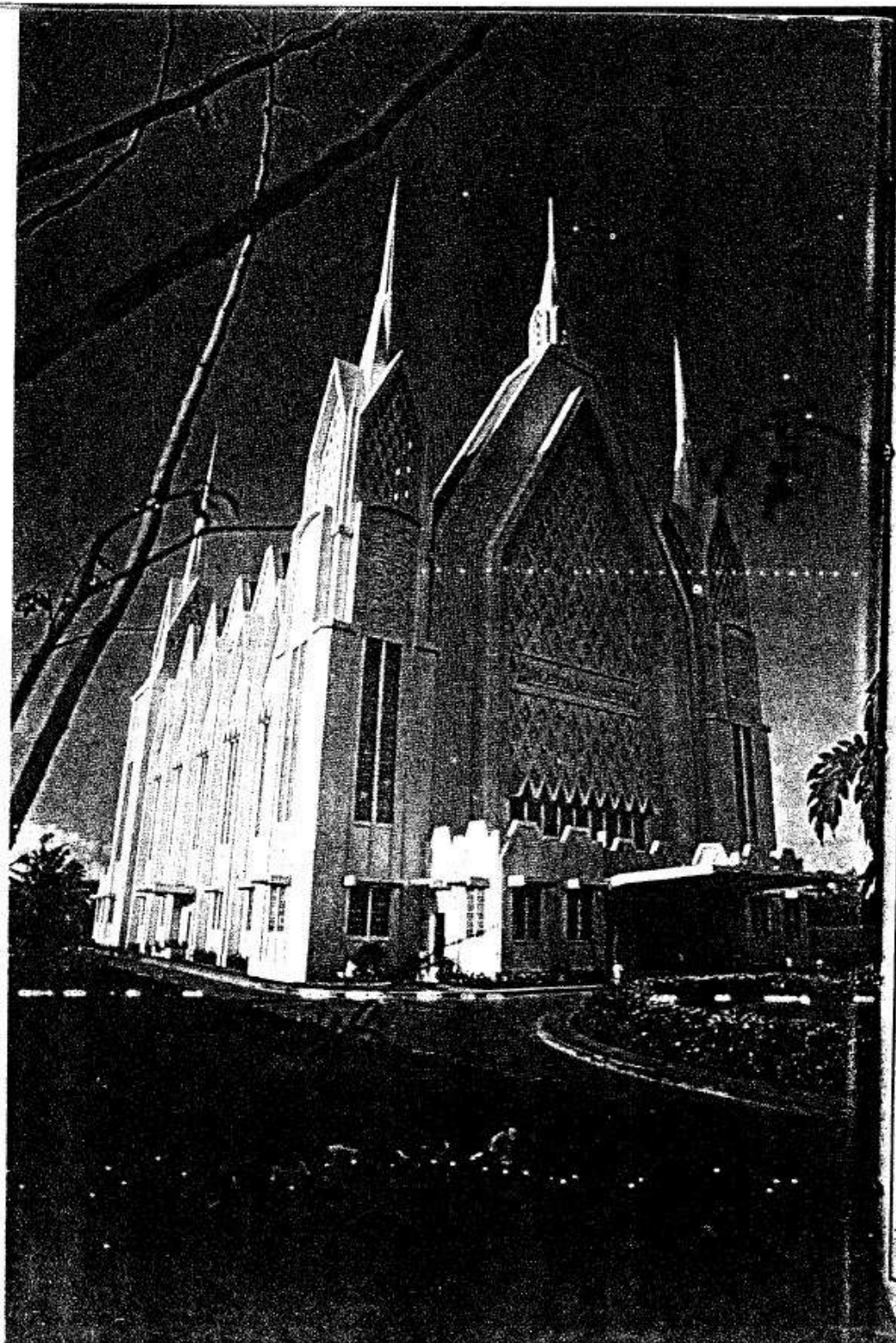
In the beginning, man was at peace with God, in direct communion with Him, and under His direct guidance in the garden of Eden. But ever since man committed sin, his peaceful relationship with God was disrupted. Man became God's enemy (Is. 59:2; Col. 1:21). He was deprived of his right to deify God and was condemned to the punishment meted out by God to the sinner which is death in the lake of fire and brimstone (Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:14).

But God did not create man just to perish or to be consigned to eternal damnation. As a matter of fact, He Himself remedied the precarious situation of man's life. He laid down His plan of salvation in order to restore man to His original plan — to enjoy an unending life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, RSV).

God's plan of salvation is to gather all men in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:9-10). This is why Christ admonished all men to enter in Him so that they could be gathered in Him. He said, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). Any man can enter Christ by becoming a member of Christ's Body which is the Church that He built or the Church of Christ (Mt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:27; Col. 1:18; Acts 20:28, Lamsa Version). So the Church is necessary. But not just any Church; only the Church which is the Body of Christ wherein God's will is fulfilled that all men be gathered in Christ as members and consequently attain salvation and eternal life. This is God's plan of salvation.

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THE CHURCH THAT CHRIST BUILT

In Matthew 16:18, the Lord Jesus Christ says, "I will build my Church." He did.

Christ's right and authority to build a Church lie on the fact that He was anointed and sent by God. He was sent by God "to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who were oppressed" (Luke 4:18, RSV). In short, He was sent to save. And to do this, He built His Church.

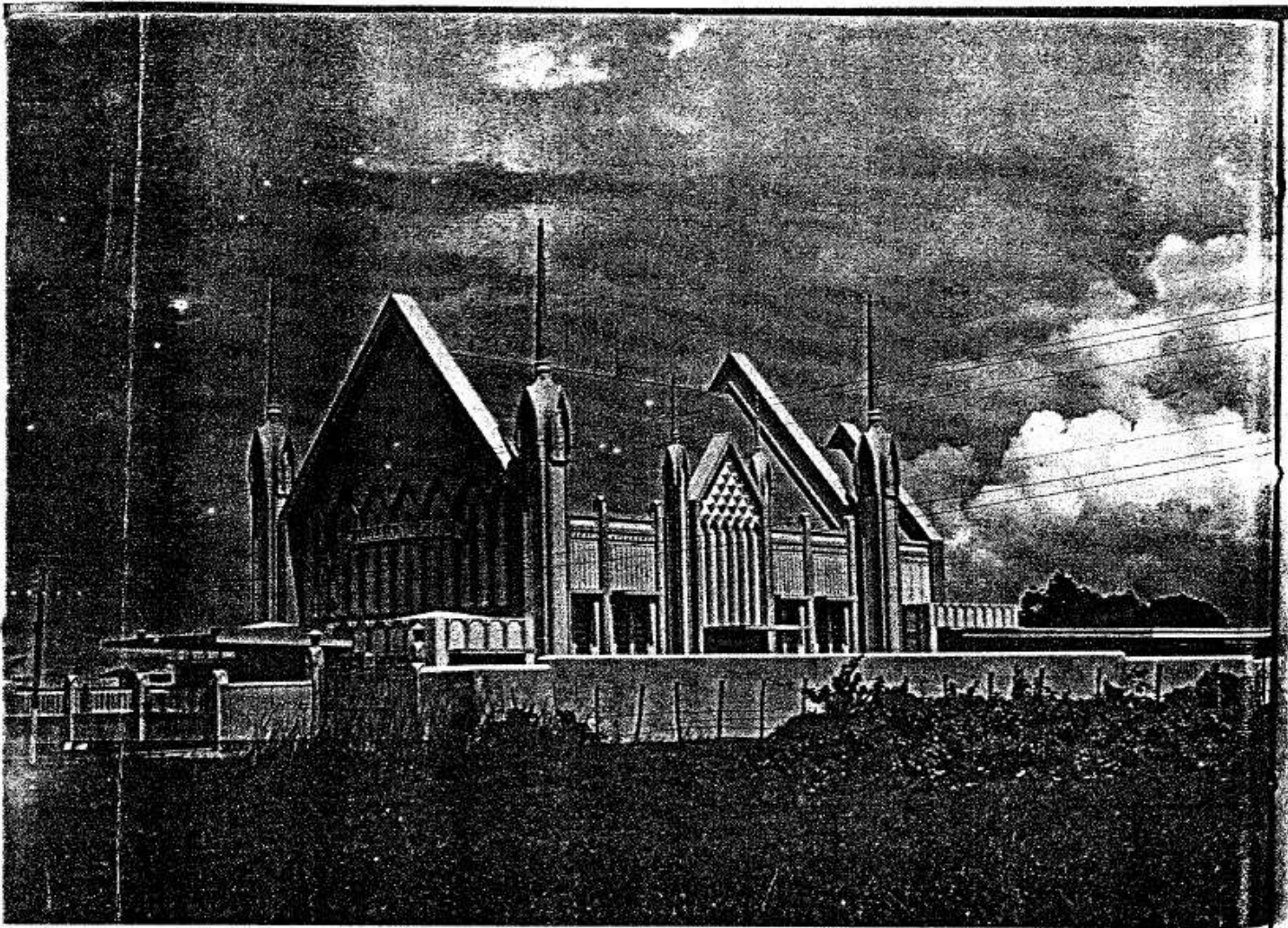
The Apostles called it Church of Christ (Acts 20:28, Lamsa Version). There are not many Churches of Christ. Only one. Though there are many members, there is only one body or one Church (Rom. 12:4-5; Col. 1:18). For there is only one faith and one baptism. So Christ established only one Church. For why would He establish many Churches if there is only one faith? He would not. Unless there are many faiths and many Gods. But since there is only one faith and only one God,

so Christ established only one Church (Eph. 4:4-6).

Even at the time when Christ was on earth, His Church was already built, complete with head and members, laws and doctrines and, most distinctively, a name — Church of Christ. It was then a "little flock" (Luke 12:32).

When Christ was already in heaven, a great persecution arose against the Church and the members, except the Apostles, were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1). And those "who were scattered went about preaching the word," as what Philip did when he went down to a city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ (Acts 8:4-5). Thus the Church grew at the time of the Apostles.

The principal instruments in propagating the Church of Christ were the Apostles for they too were commissioned messengers; they too were sent by God in the name of Christ (II Cor. 5:20; Mark 16:15-16).



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THE NAME OF THE TRUE CHURCH

Our Lord Jesus Christ called the Church that He built, "My Church" (Mt. 16:18). Any Church not built by Christ would not be called by Him, "My Church."

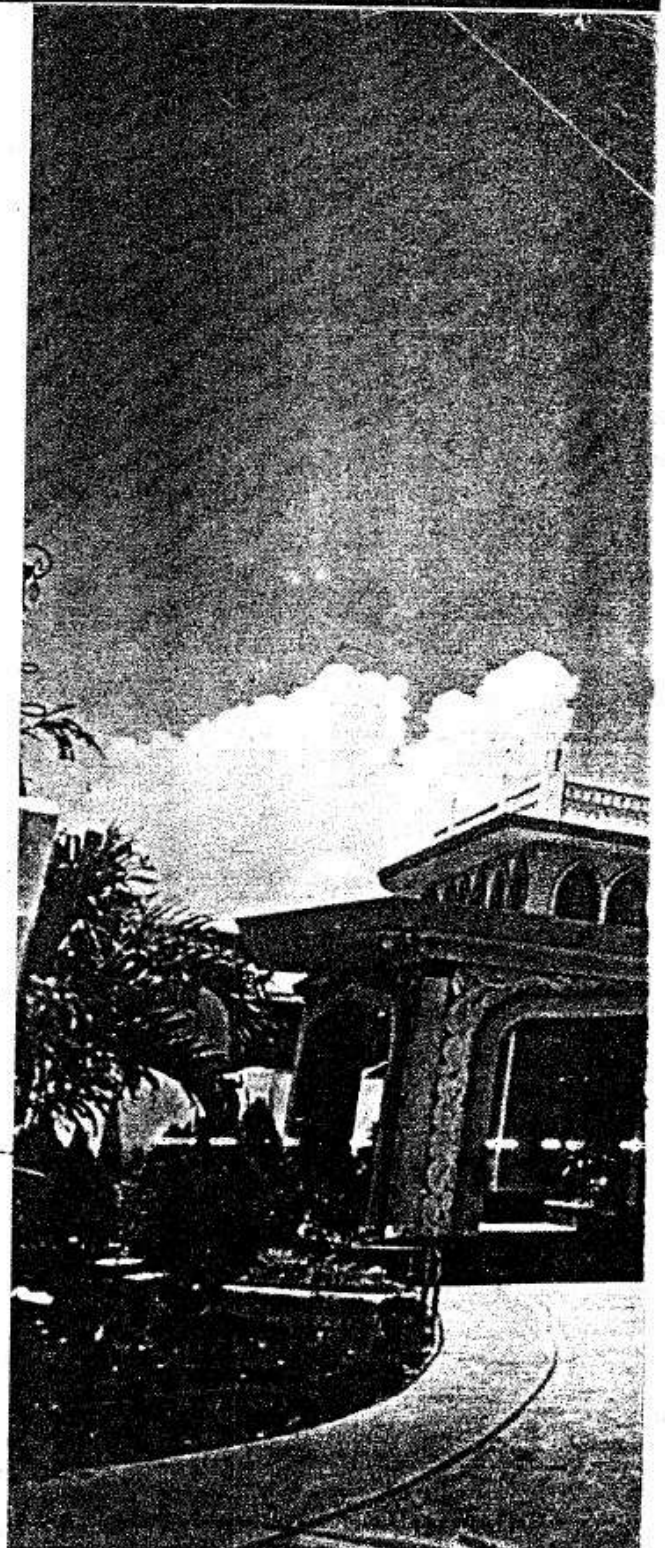
The true Church built by Christ is called by name. It is the mark set by Christ Himself to identify His sheep (John 10:3).

What's in a name? So far as the true Church is concerned, salvation is in *the* name.

Whose name? Our Lord Jesus Christ's (Act 4:10,12). The name of Christ, in relation to man's salvation, is very important indeed. Our sins will be forgiven because of His name (1 John 2:12). There is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby man must be saved and have eternal life (Acts 4:10, 12; 1 John 5:13).

To adhere to any religion not founded by Christ and therefore not bearing the name of Christ is to forfeit salvation. To disregard the name of Christ is to blaspheme Christ's worthy and noble name (James 2:7). Any religion not bearing the name of Christ does not belong to Him.

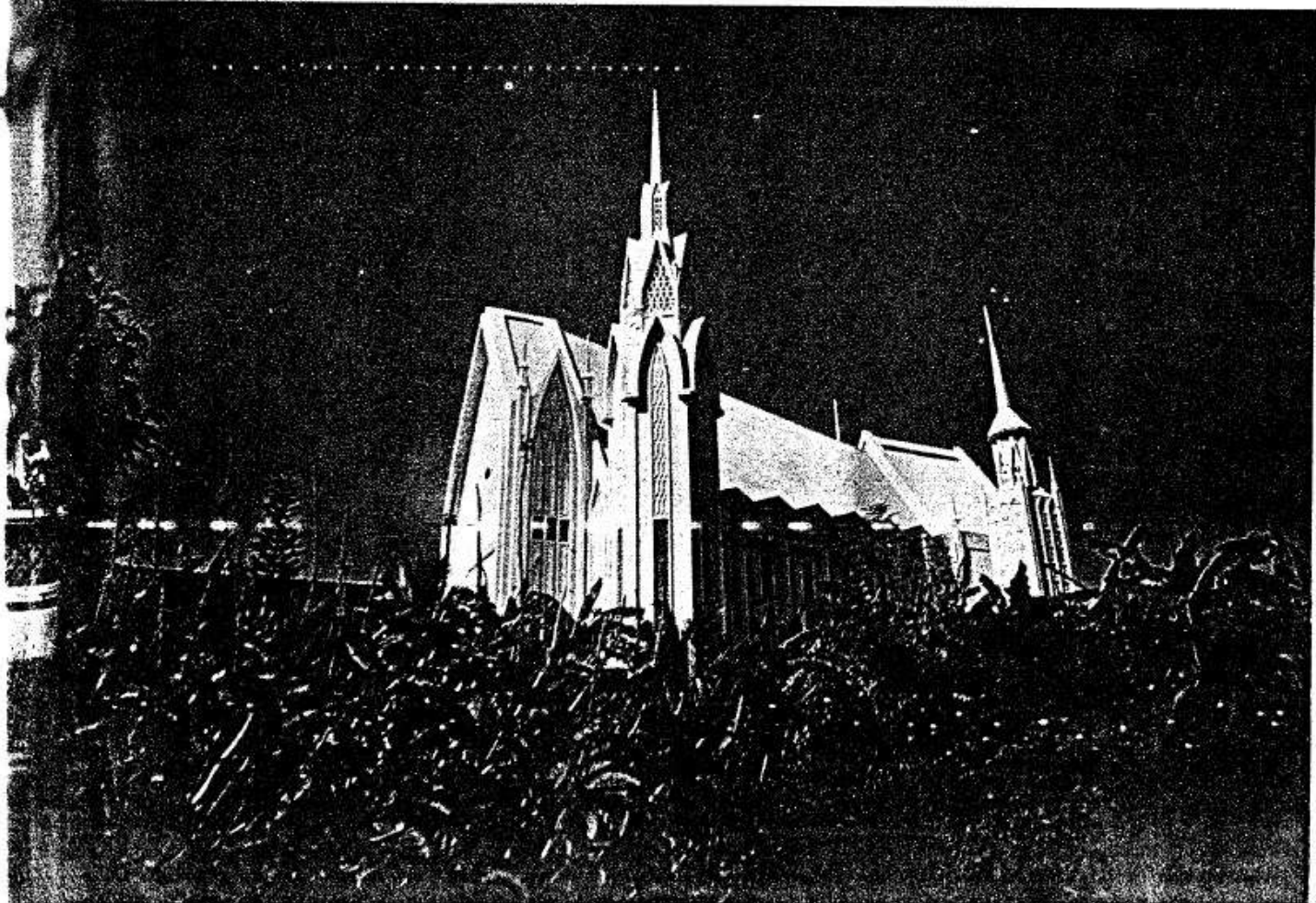
The Apostles aptly called the one and only true Church that Christ built, Church of Christ (Acts 20:28, Lamsa Version) or Iglesia ni Cristo in Pilipino. This is the only true Church, the one upon which the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is called (Acts 15:17-18).

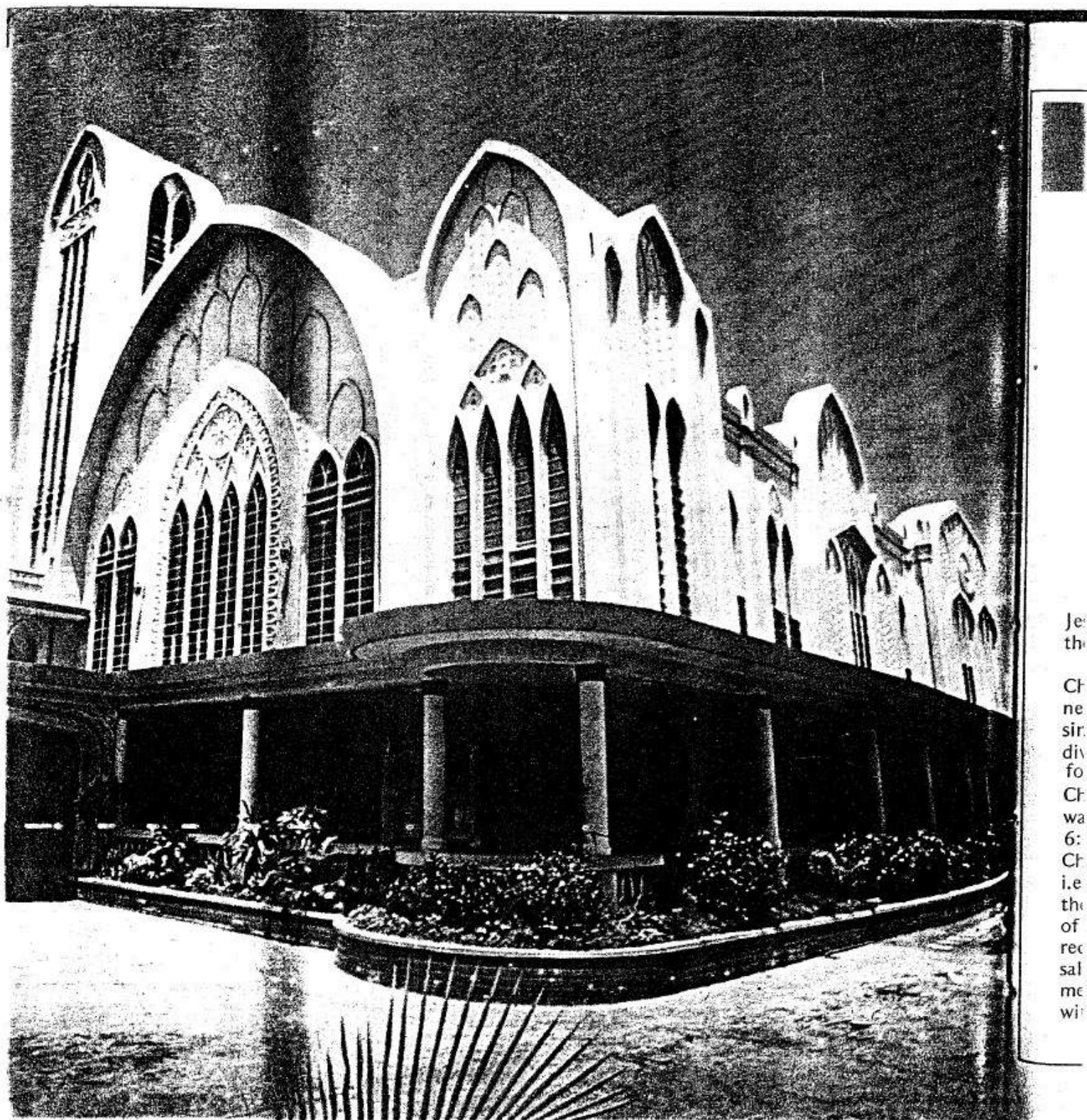


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CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH ARE INSEPARABLE

By calling the Church that He built, "My Church" (Mt. 16:18), our Lord Jesus Christ plainly established His relation to the Church. The Church is Christ's.

Out of twain (two) — the Church and Christ Himself — Christ created in Himself one new man to effect the redemption of the sinner without violating the requirement of divine justice that every man shall suffer death for his own sin (Dt. 24:16). Since all, except Christ, have sinned, so all must suffer the wages of sin which is death (Romans 5:12 6:23; 1 Pet. 2:22; Rev. 20:14). But when Christ became Head of His Body, the Church, i.e., by creating the one new man, He assumed the responsibility for the sins of the members of His Church thus legally effectuating man's reconciliation to God and man's attainment of salvation. Christ's death for the sins of the members of His Church was fully in accordance with the law of God for Christ and His Church

are one in the sight of God — the Church being His Body and He, its Head (Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:27).

Christ's relation to His Church is further illustrated by Apostle Paul when he likened the Church to a chaste virgin betrothed to Christ (11 Cor. 11:2). Just as the husband and wife are joined together by God as one flesh and therefore inseparable, so also are Christ and His Church (Mt. 19:5-6; Eph. 5:31-32).

Therefore, to reject the Church is to reject our Lord Jesus Christ. Because to reject the Body is to reject its Head.

It does not suffice therefore to accept Christ alone and disregard the Church to attain salvation. The faith-alone-in-Christ-and-never-mind-the-Church concept is a false doctrine and a dangerous one at that. To accept Christ is to accept His Church. To do otherwise is like putting asunder what God has joined together.

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SALVATION IS BY GOD'S ELECTION

Man cannot be saved by his own works much less by his faith alone. Rather, God elects the people on whom shall He bestow the gift of salvation. He sets them apart to be godly before His sight and hears them when they call unto Him (Ps. 4:3).

During ancient times, Abram (later renamed by God Abraham) was the one chosen by God. He was commanded to depart and separate from his father's house and he faithfully obeyed (Gen. 12:1-2). So, he was graced with the right to serve God and he received

the blessings of the covenant established by God with him and his seed. To his son, Isaac, and his son's son, Jacob were also given the right to deify and serve God (Gen. 17:7; Ps. 105:9-10).

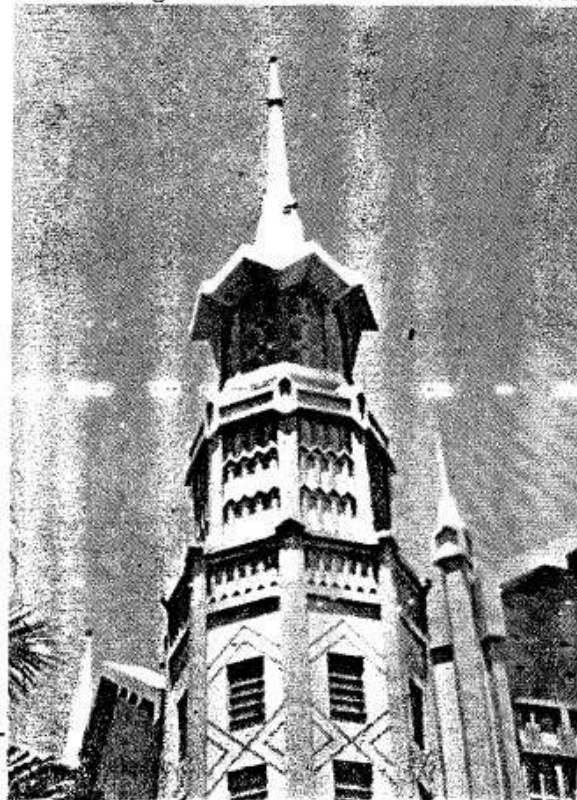
Israel, a nation which emerged from the twelve tribes of Jacob, was elected by God as a holy and special people who were given the right of adoption of God, the covenants and holy statutes together with the right to worship and deify God. And above all, they were endowed with the promise of salvation and eternal life (Dt. 7:6-8; Rom. 9:4).

Yet Israel did not remain faithful to the commandments of God. They departed from the ways of the Lord. And as a result of their iniquities, they forfeited the right to worship God and were therefore deprived of salvation. (Hos. 4:6).

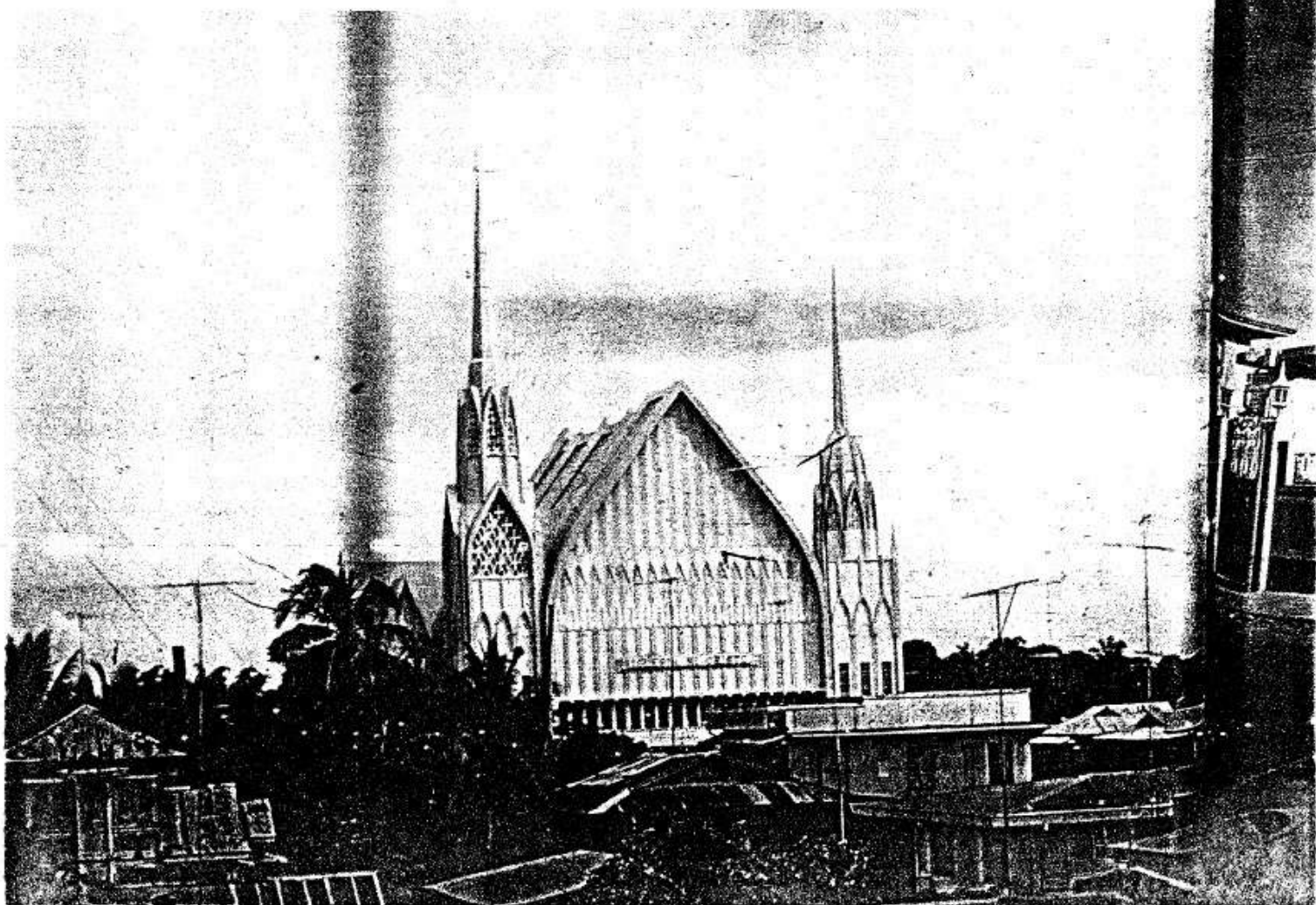
After the fall of Israel, a new and chosen generation was elected by God to a royal priesthood, bestowed with the right to offer praises and homage to Him. They were called to the Kingdom of His Son — the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 3:9; Col. 1:13).

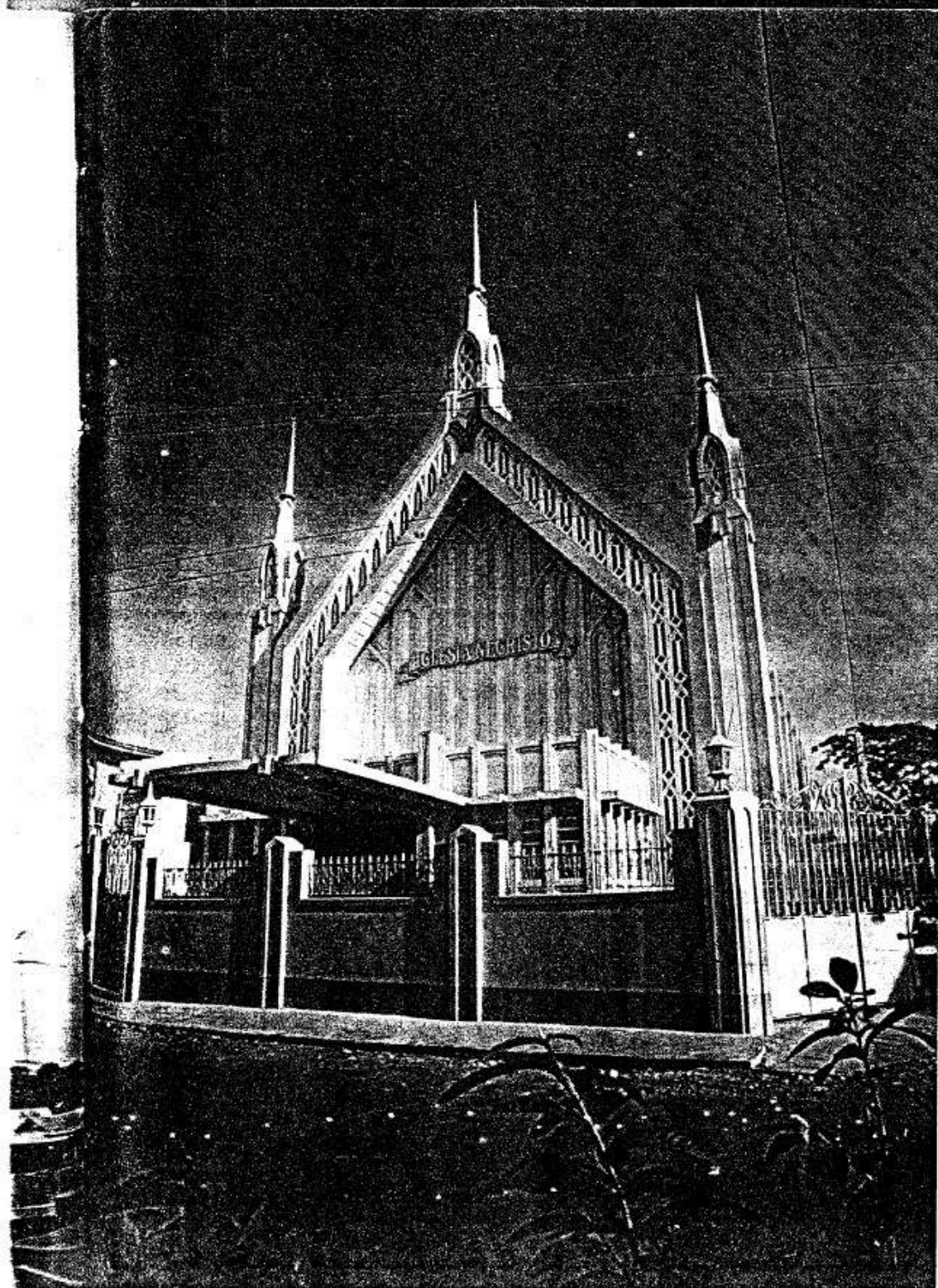
These chosen people are the members of the Church of Christ. They being in Christ, are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

"For the promise," said Apostle Peter to the members of the Church of Christ, "is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him" (Acts 2:39, RSV).

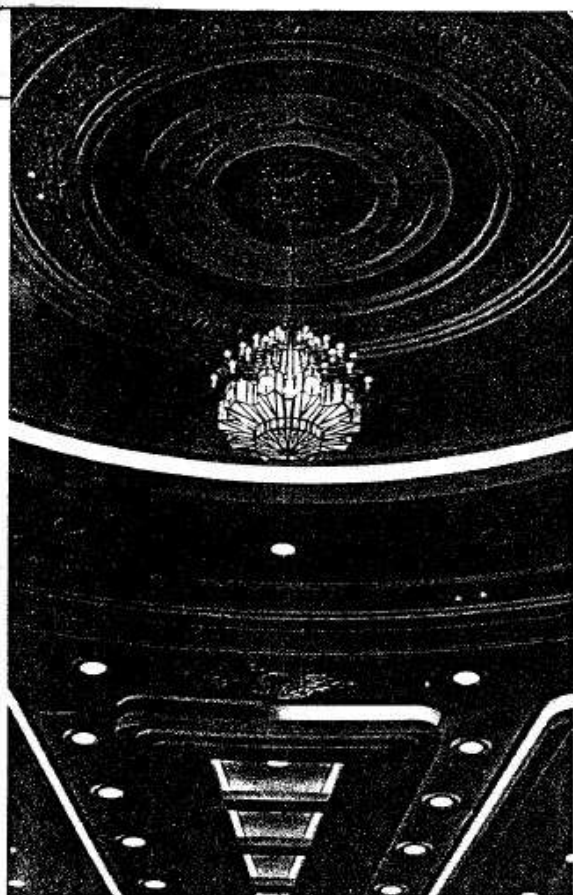


*Lipa City,
Batangas*





*Barrio Obrero,
Caloocan City*



THE TRUE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

A disciple is "a pupil, follower, or adherent of any teacher." The word implies the acceptance in mind and in life of the views and practices of the teacher. In the New Testament, a disciple means in the widest sense, one who accepts the teachings of somebody. So mention is made of the disciples of Christ (Mark 9:28). Sometimes it refers to the Twelve Apostles (Mt. 10:1; 11:1).

It is not only prestigious, but also a distinctive honor in the sight of God to be identified as a disciple of Christ. Because as one such adherent of Christ, by virtue of his relationship to Christ, he is entitled to the glorious life with which Christ is endowed by God.

But it is not enough that one believes in Christ and accepts Him as his personal Savior to merit such honor of being identified as a disciple of Christ. Christ Himself proved this when He said "to the Jews who had believed in him, 'if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples' " (John 8:31, RSV). The true disciples of Christ accept His words and adhere to them. They "continue in His words" or keep His commandments.

It is therefore necessary that a believer must know the teachings of His Master — the Lord Jesus Christ — particularly those relative to salvation. And he must abide by such teachings. This marks him as a true disciple of Christ.

The Bible has this testimony about the disciples of Christ: "And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the Church and taught a large company of people; and in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians" (Acts 11:26, RSV). The true disciples of Christ are found in the Church of Christ.

THE APOSTASY

The Church established by Christ in Jerusalem in the first century did not continue to exist. It was apostatized. But it does not mean that those who were responsible for the apostasy established another Church; that same Church was strayed away from the pristine Christian faith.

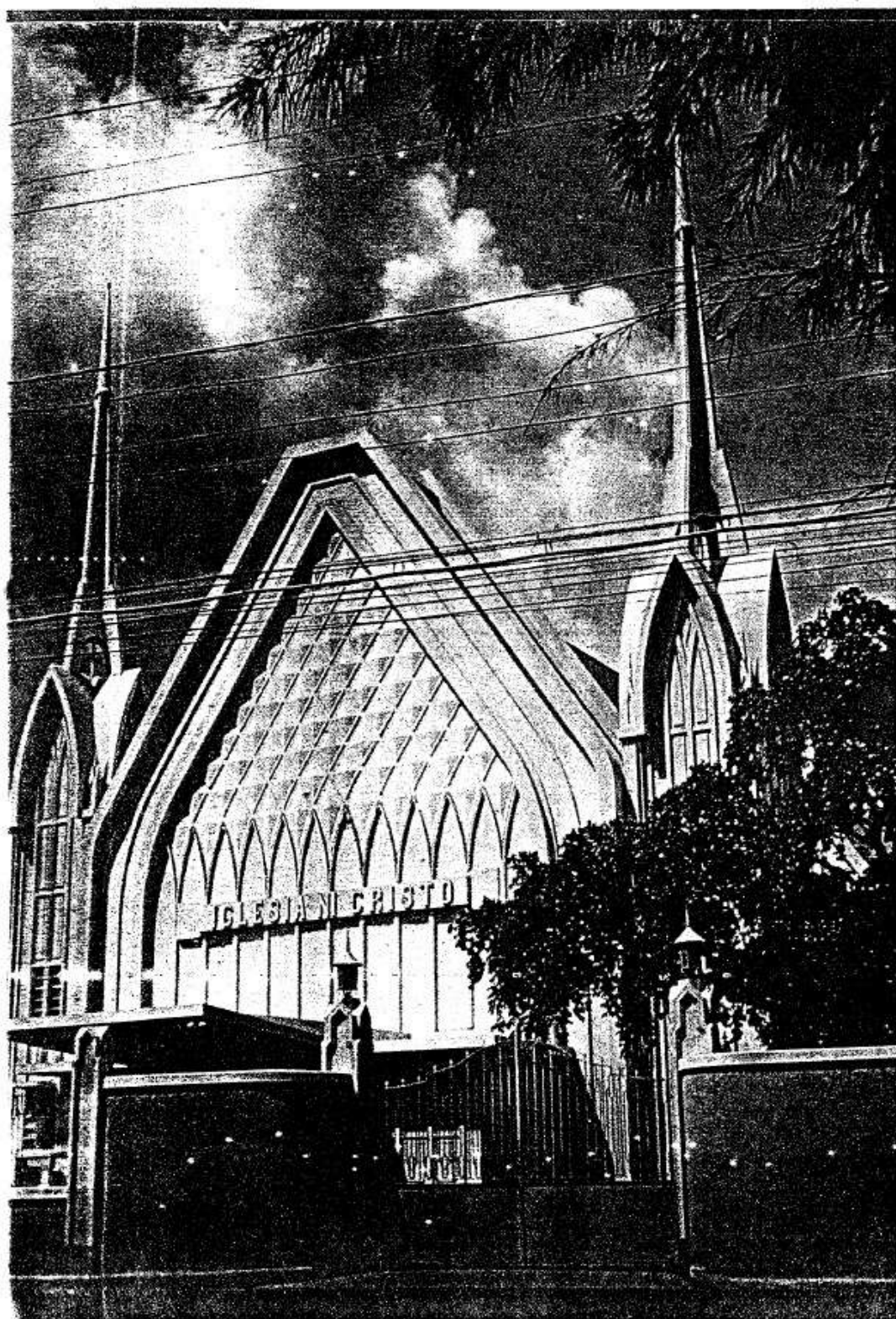
Apostle Paul foretold the Christians then that there will be a departure from the faith because some will give heed to "deceitful spirits or doctrines of demons" (I Tim. 4:1). According to him, after his death, men will arise who will speak perverse things to draw away the disciples of Christ after them (Acts 20:30). The perverse things which they will speak are the doctrines of demons two of which are "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats" (I Tim. 4:3). They will make an apostate Church out of the first century Church of Christ.

Apostle Peter called them false prophets who will bring in destructive heresies denying the Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, by rejecting Him as the Head of the Church, as the stone

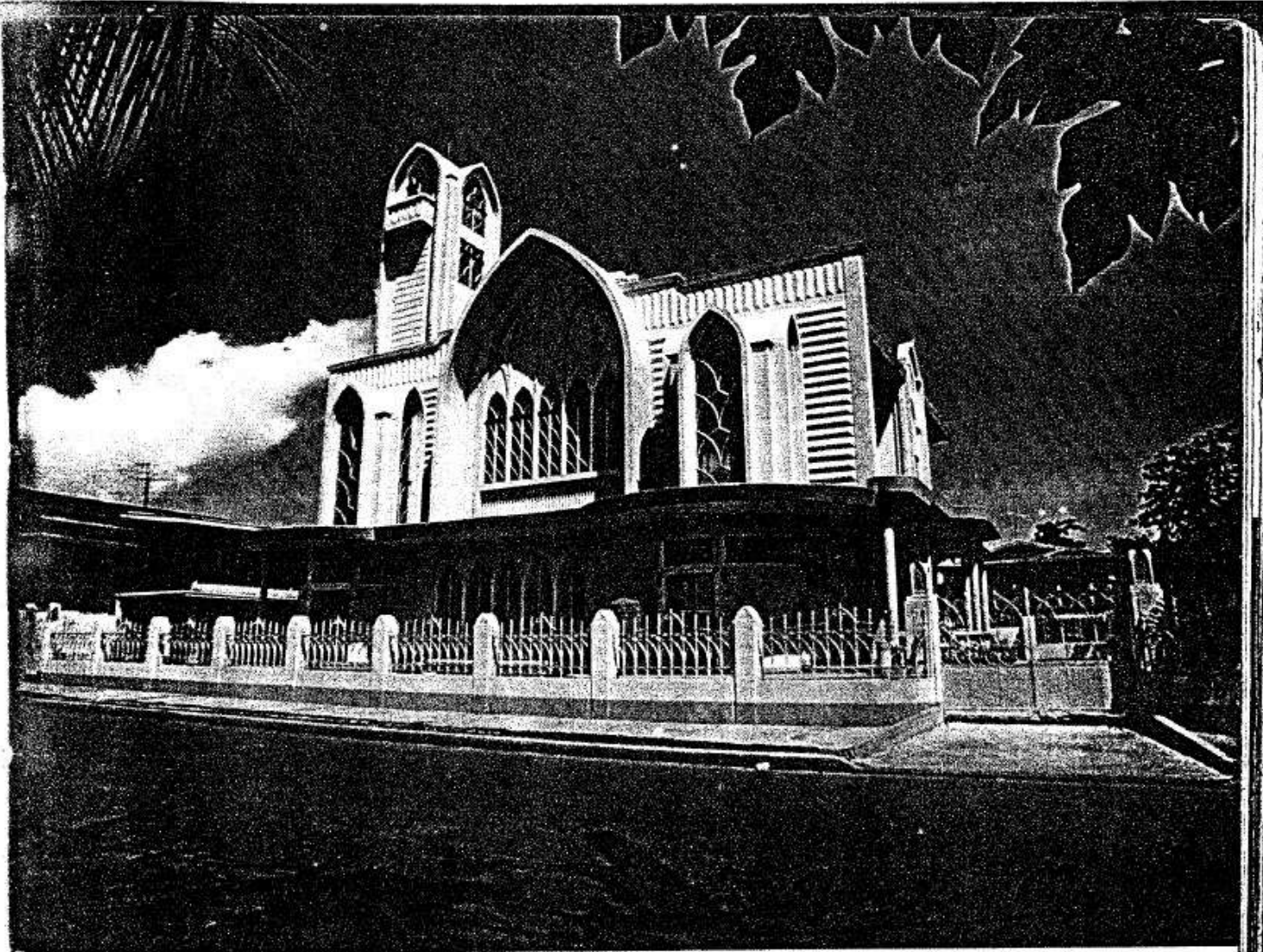
foundation and by rejecting His name (II Pet. 2:1; Acts 2:36; 4:10-12; Eph. 2:20).

Another distinguishing mark of the apostates is the one described by Apostle Paul: "the man of sin . . . showing himself that he is God" (II Th. 2:3-4).

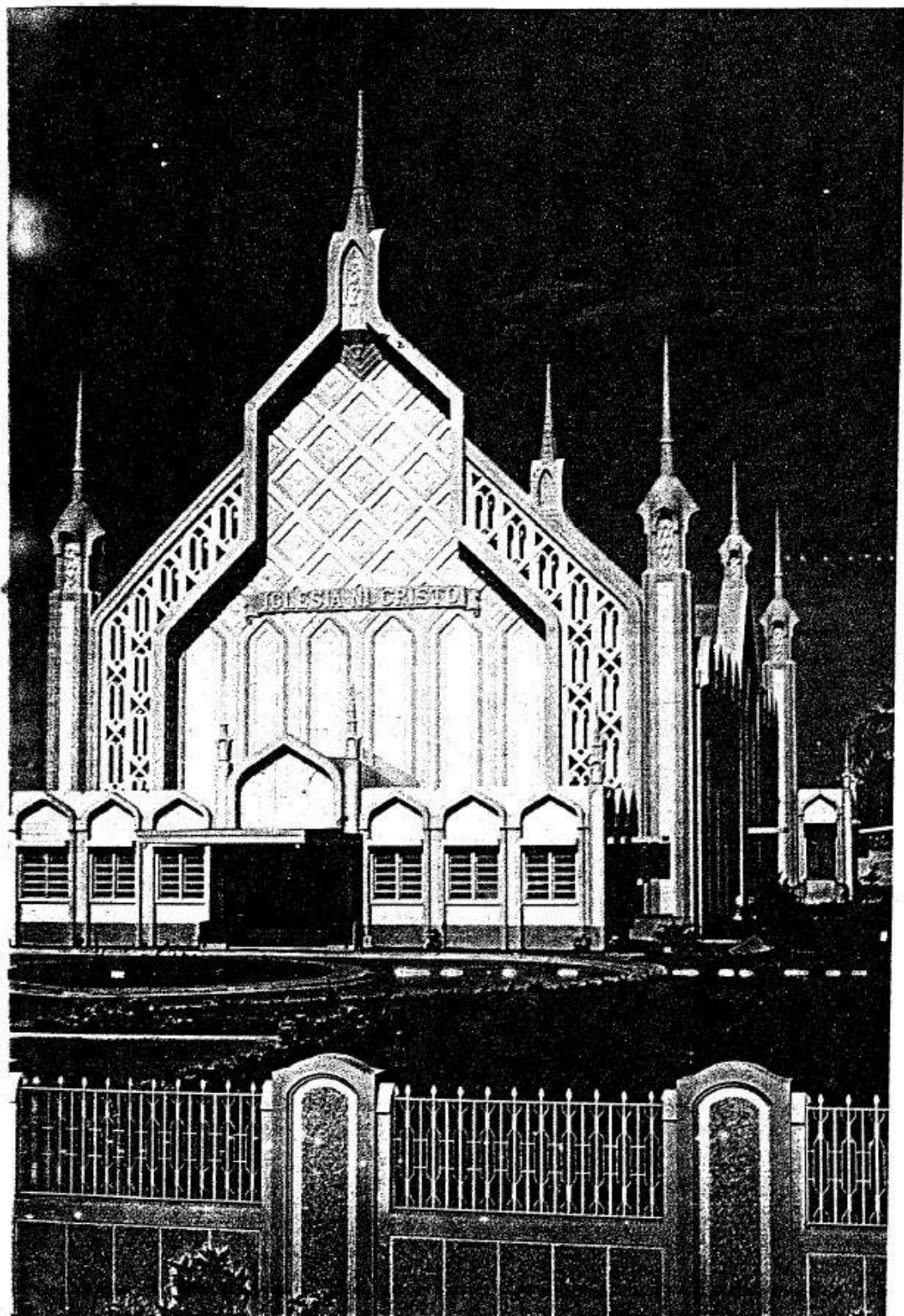
One does not need to go too far to learn that the Catholic Church upholds and teaches the two above mentioned doctrines of demons. The Catholic Church denied the Lord Christ's Headship by putting Peter and the Popes in His stead. It denied the Lord's position as the stone foundation, again, by putting Peter in His stead. It rejected His name, Christ, by sporting such an unscriptural name as Roman Catholic Church. And the Pope's usurpation of the Fatherhood of God (God being the Father of Souls) fits well to Apostle Paul's description of the man of sin. So now the Catholic Church cannot evade the accusing finger of this biblical revelation. The Catholic Church is the apostate Church. This also proves beyond doubt that apostasy was a fact.



Zamboanga City



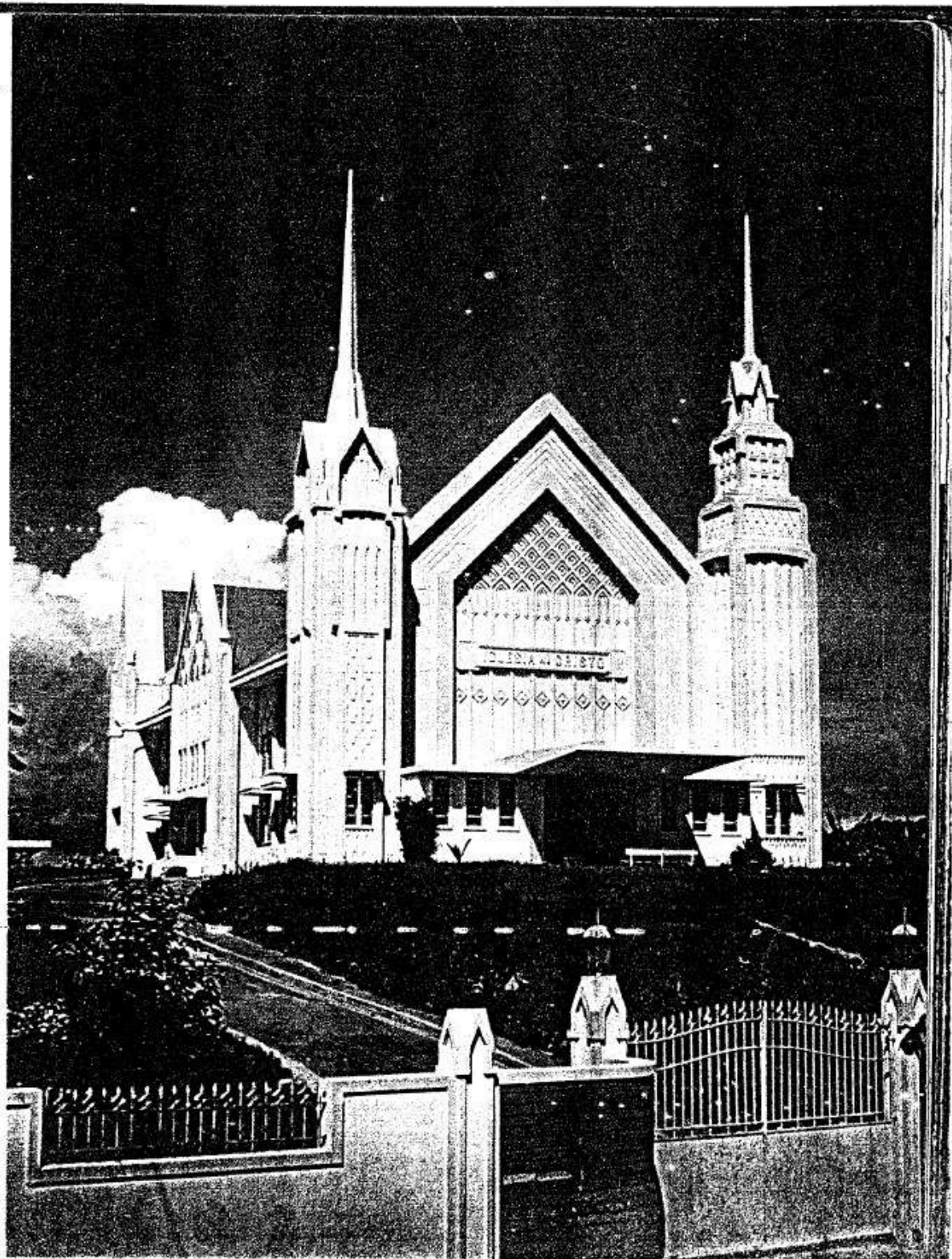
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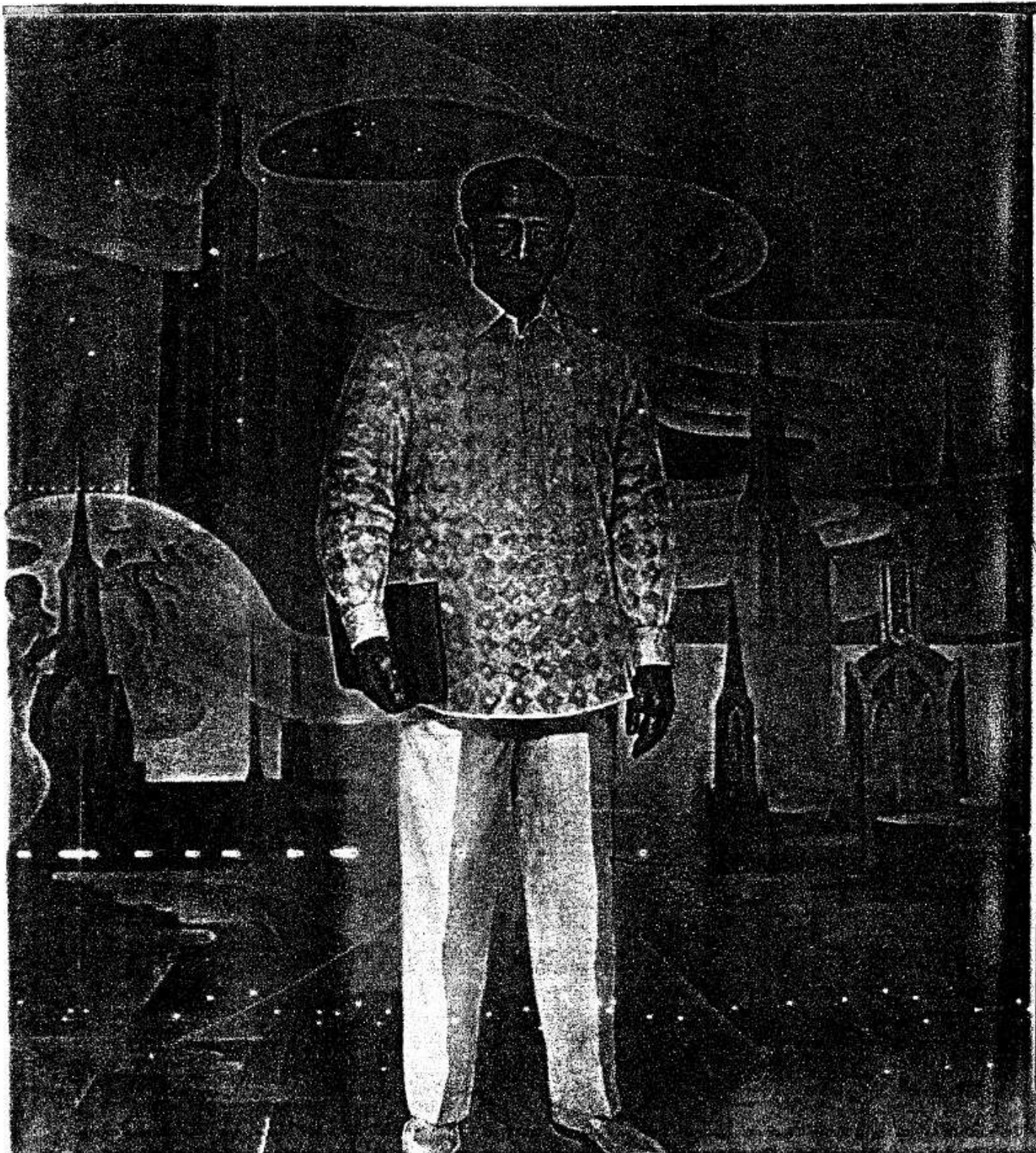


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THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT

PHILIPPINES

The first-century Church of Christ was entirely apostatized. But according to Christ, His sheep are not only those which were already within the fold then, but also those other sheep which were not yet in the fold when He was still on earth. He said, "I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16, RSV).

The sheep of Christ with promise belong to three groups. The first and second groups — the Jews and the Gentiles — were already called and were already in the fold during the time of Christ and of His Apostles. The third group was still "far off" and they were not yet called then; they are yet to be called by God (Acts 2:39) to become one flock or one Church of Christ (Acts 20:28, Lamsa Version).

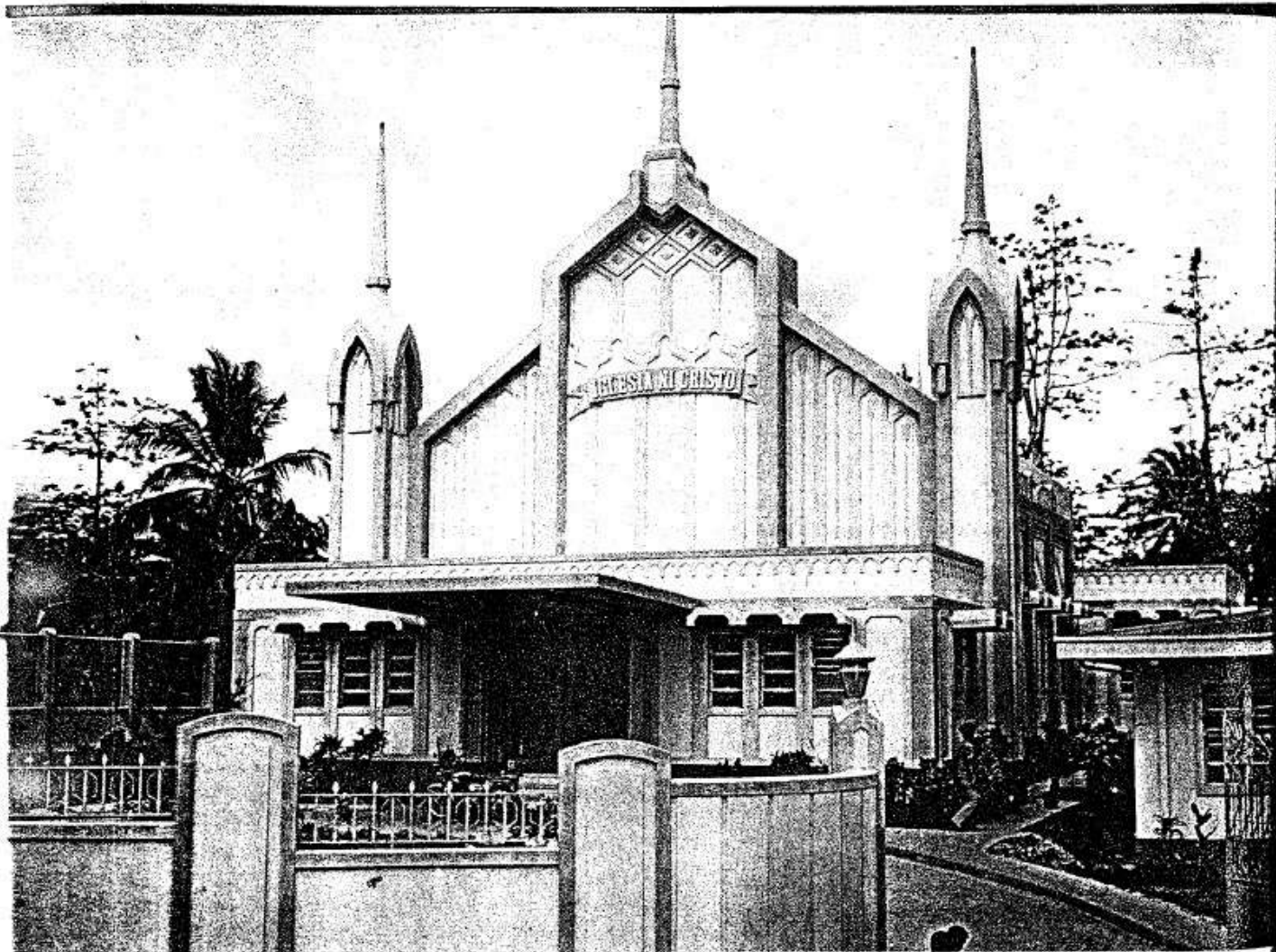
So when the Iglesia ni Cristo appeared in the Philippines in 1914, a prophecy was fulfilled, a prophecy which God Himself told: "From the Far East will I bring your offspring" (Is. 43:5, Moffatt).

The north (Protestant Church which came to the Philippines from North America) will give them up and the south (Roman Catholic Church which came to the Philip-

pines from Rome in Southern Europe) cannot keep them back. For God said, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth" (Is. 43:6).

These children of God from the Far East (Apostle Peter said they are the ones who "are afar off") belong to the third group of Christ's sheep. They are called by the name created by God for His glory: the name Christ. This name is called upon the children of God in the Far East. They are called Church of Christ because they are the one flock (Church) of Christ (Is. 43:7; Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:9; Rom. 16:16).

They are the other sheep of Christ who will be called "from the ends of the earth." The *ends* of the earth signifies the time before the *end* of the world or the second coming of Christ which is signalled manifestly by "wars and rumors of wars." (Mt. 24:6). This war occurred in 1914 and was better known as the First World War. It was during that time that the children of God in the Far East or in the Philippines were called. Indeed, at the outbreak of the war on July 27, 1914, the Iglesia ni Cristo was concurrently officially registered in the Philippine government.



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THE MESSENGER OF GOD: INSTRUMENTAL IN THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The members of the Iglesia ni Cristo believe that Felix Manalo was the Messenger of God instrumental in the re-establishment of the Church of Christ after it was apostatized.

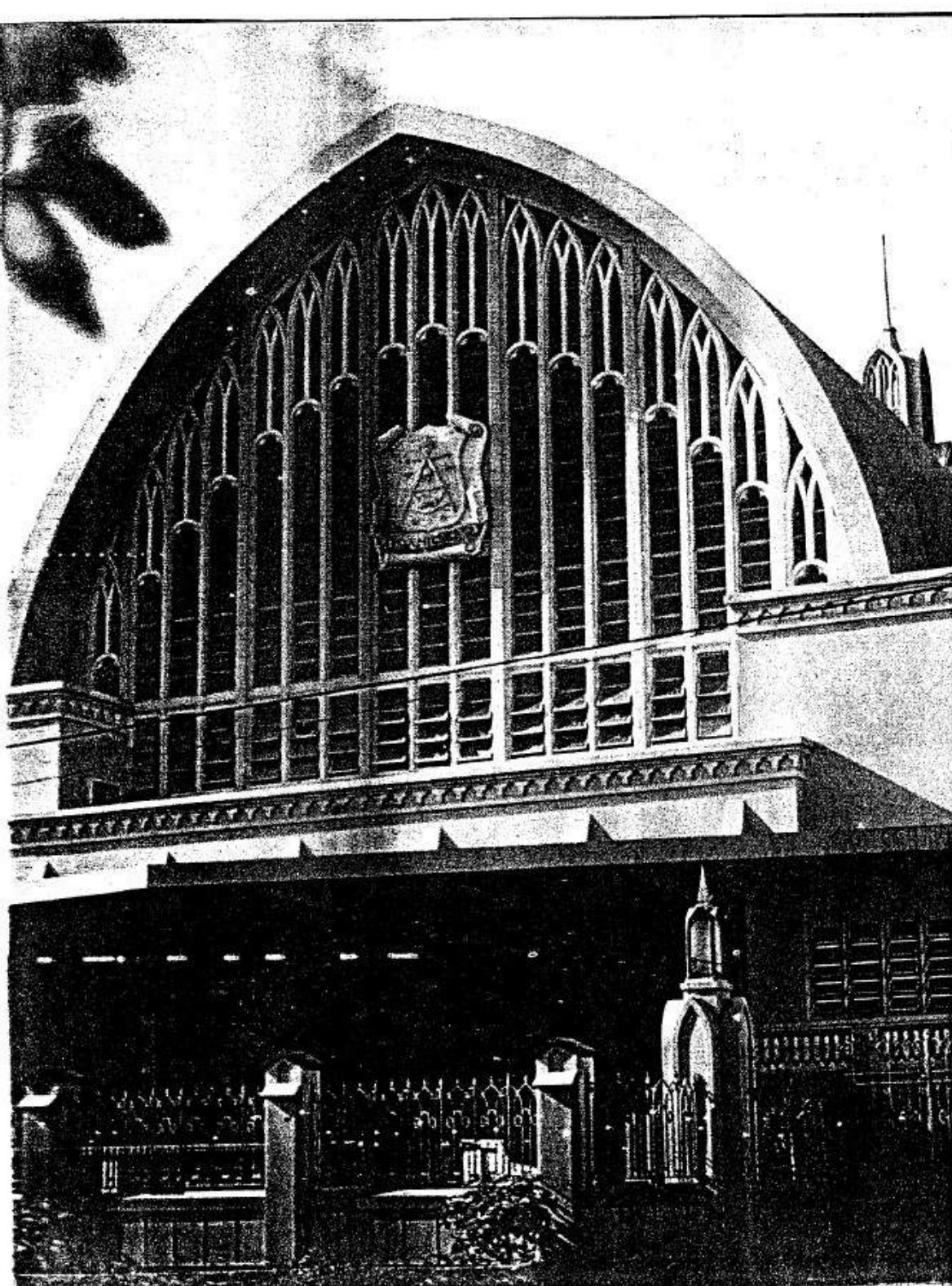
Isaiah 46:11 articulates one of the prophecies on the Last Messenger of God: "Calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it" (RSV). In this prophecy, the bird is from the east and the man, who is also the bird is from a far country. So this bird of prey who is a man of God's counsel or who does the counsel or word of God (Ps. 107:11) is from the Far East or the Philippines (W. Hist. p. 445).

He is called a bird of prey because the sons and daughters of God from the Far East or the Philippines are being hindered by the north and the south (representing Protestantism and Catholicism) and the Messenger of

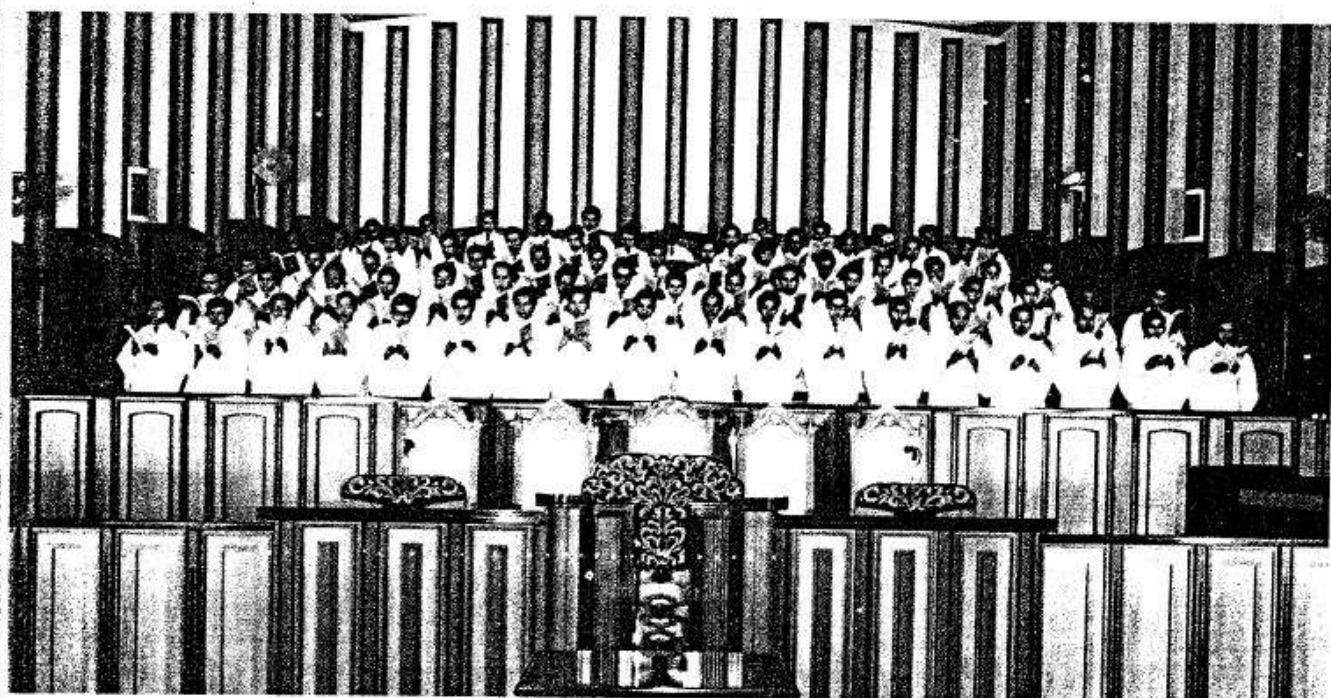
God has to bring them out of these two religions (Is. 43:6).

As a matter of fact, the members of the Iglesia ni Cristo that began in the Philippines were formerly members of these two big religions. They who were converted by the preaching of the Last Messenger of God were called into the fellowship of Christ in the one body or Church of Christ, through his preaching of the Gospel (I Cor. 1:9; Col. 3:15; 1:18; II Th. 2:14).

The work of evangelization by Felix Manalo was of God. To him God said in the prophecy, written in Isaiah 41:9-10: "You whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, 'You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off' " (RSV); "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (KJV).



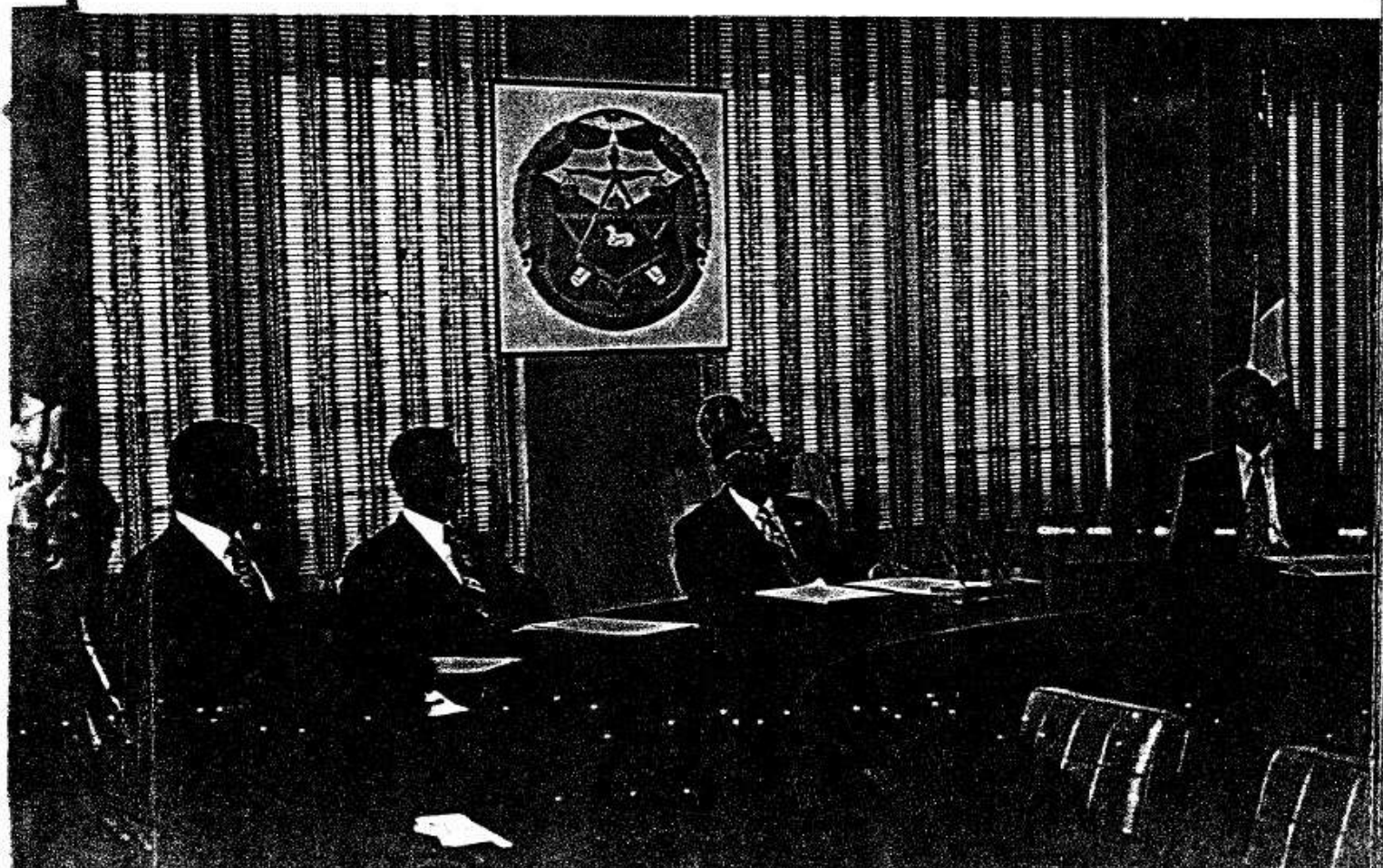
Cubao,
Quezon City



The worship services form the focal point of Iglesia ni Cristo existence. No worship service is complete without hymn singing led by a well-trained choir.

The lay organizations of the church undertake various projects such as family planning, medical care and physical fitness.

Following his sire's glittering example of dedication to duty, Eraño Maralo took to heart the administration of the Church.



THE RIGHT TO PREACH

The preaching of the Gospel is very valuable indeed. It has very much to do with man's salvation, because the Gospel is the saving power of God for everyone who has faith. The Gospel reveals the righteousness of God (Rom. 1:16-17). Our Lord Jesus Christ said that he who believes in the Gospel taught or preached and is baptized shall be saved. But he who does not believe shall be damned (Mark 16:15-16). So, we see the importance of preaching the pure Gospel.

Equally important, of course, is the true preacher. Because only the true preacher has the right to preach the pure Gospel.

When the "ignorant and unstable" preach the Gospel, the result is not salvation of man, but their own ruin and the ruin of those to whom they preach (II Pet. 3:16). This is so, because not any one is capable of reaching the

knowledge of the truth of the Gospel because it is kept secret in mystery (II Tim. 3:7; Rom. 16:25). So outside God's commissioning, no one, even after a diligent and constant study, can know the truth of the Gospel.

However, the true preachers as messengers of God know the mystery of the wisdom of God. They are those to whom it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God by means of a revelation through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Mark 4:11-12; Eph. 3:2-3, 5). They are the ones who have the exclusive right to preach the Gospel.

"... how could anyone, spread the news without a commission to do so?" Apostle Paul rhetorically asks. "And that is what Scripture affirms: 'How welcome are the feet of the messengers of good news'" (Rom. 10:15, The New English Bible).

On top of his ever-whelmingly burdensome task of administering an ever-growing flock, Eraño Manalo supervises the training of ministers to answer the spiritual needs of brethren everywhere. One of the most significant moment in a minister's life is his ordination.



✓ THE TRUE BAPTISM

The Lord Jesus Christ decreed that those who are to be made His disciples or followers should be baptized (Mt. 28:19). Any one who wants to be made a disciple of Christ, has to be baptized.

Three conditions must be fulfilled before one can be baptized, namely, religious instruction in the Gospel, belief in the doctrines taught, and repentance of sins (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38). Only when these conditions are met can one be baptized into one Body, the Church (I Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:18; Rom. 16:16).

Baptism, as commanded by Christ and taught by the Apostles, is "baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4). He who receives baptism is "dead to sin." So in baptism, a burial takes place. Sin is buried for the old self has been crucified with Christ, "so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin" (Rom. 6:6, RSV). Just as Christ died on the cross and after death He was buried, so also is he who receives baptism is buried. And just as Christ did not remain

in the grave but rose from the dead by the glory of God, so also those who are baptized do not remain immersed in the water (Rom. 6:4).

To effect such "burial" the one baptizing and the one who is to be baptized must both go down into the water. Therefore, water sufficient for the purpose is needed in baptism. Because baptism is conferred by immersion, and not by infusion or pouring as practiced by the Catholic Church.

By means of baptism, one is made a disciple of Christ and attains forgiveness of sins. And after the sins are forgiven salvation is assured.

After baptism, one should walk in newness of life. He should put on Christ and live after the life of Christ (Gal. 3:27; 2:20). He should emerge from the water to live, by the grace of God, a new life, a Christian life, as a member not of just any Church, but of the true Church, the Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ).

FAITH ALONE CONCEPT: A FARCE

Faith is a basic requirement of God for the attainment of all His blessings: the forgiveness of sins, the acceptability and validity of service and worship to Him, and eventually, salvation and the attainment of life everlasting.

A good number of people realize this truth and exploit it, hence, the widespread concept that faith alone in God and in Christ will suffice to guaranty man's salvation.

The Bible shows the danger of such faith-alone concept because it repudiates the requirement prescribed by God relative to the attainment of salvation.

Faith without works is unprofitable, useless. It is dead in itself (James 2:17). "What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him?" asks Apostle James (James 2:14, RSV).

Faith is necessary but "you see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone" (James 2:24, RSV). If one is not justified,

sanctified or restored to his right position with God, salvation and eternal life cannot be attained.

Faith is made perfect if it is accompanied by works (James 2:22). Faith in Christ can be made perfect by accompanying it with the required works of faith taught by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For instance, Christ commands all men to enter Him by becoming members of His Church so as to be saved (John 10:9). If one really believes in Christ and really has faith in Him he would obey this command without reservation and without an iota of doubt. Then and only then will his faith be perfected.

A man may wholeheartedly believe and have faith in God and in Christ but so long as he is outside the Church of Christ — meaning, he has not complied with the command of Christ and therefore his faith is without works — he remains condemned to the lake of fire.

A BROTHERHOOD IN CHRIST

Brotherhood in the Iglesia ni Cristo is maintained and upheld with pure love and respect. Members call each other brother and sister.

This brotherhood was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He said, "You (referring to the members of His Church) are all brethren" whose Father is God in heaven (Mt. 23:8-9).

Members of the Church of Christ are all brethren in virtue of the fact that they are all children of God and members of God's household; they are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:19-20).

Brethren as they are, they are admonished to "love one another with brotherly affection" (Rom. 12:10).

Christ is not ashamed to call the members of His Church His brethren, for they

are also children of God by virtue of the redemption He effected through His death; they are made righteous in the sight of God (Heb. 2:11; Rom. 3:24-25).

It is indeed a duty of the members of the Church of Christ to love one another. "As I have loved you," Christ says, "...also love one another. By this all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another" (John 13:34-35).

"Any one who hates his brother is a murderer," writes Apostle John, "and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15, RSV).

So to uphold brotherhood, the members of the Church of Christ are warned not to defraud their own brothers nor do them wrong. If there is a misunderstanding, members are exhorted to forgive one another as the Father has forgiven their trespasses (Eph. 4:32; Mt. 6:14-15).

WHY THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO BUILDS HOUSES OF WORSHIP

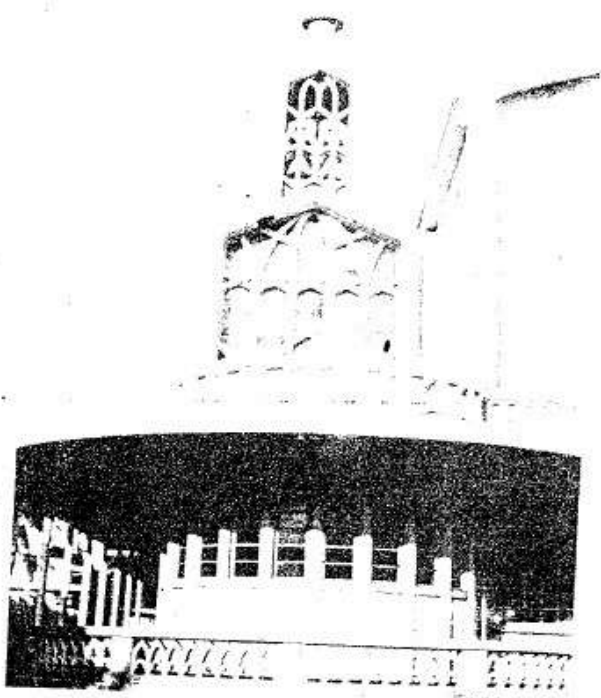
The Iglesia ni Cristo has erected quite a number of concrete houses of worship which have become landmarks throughout the breadth and length of the Philippine Archipelago. (Some of them are shown in this booklet). And many more are being built not only in the Philippines but

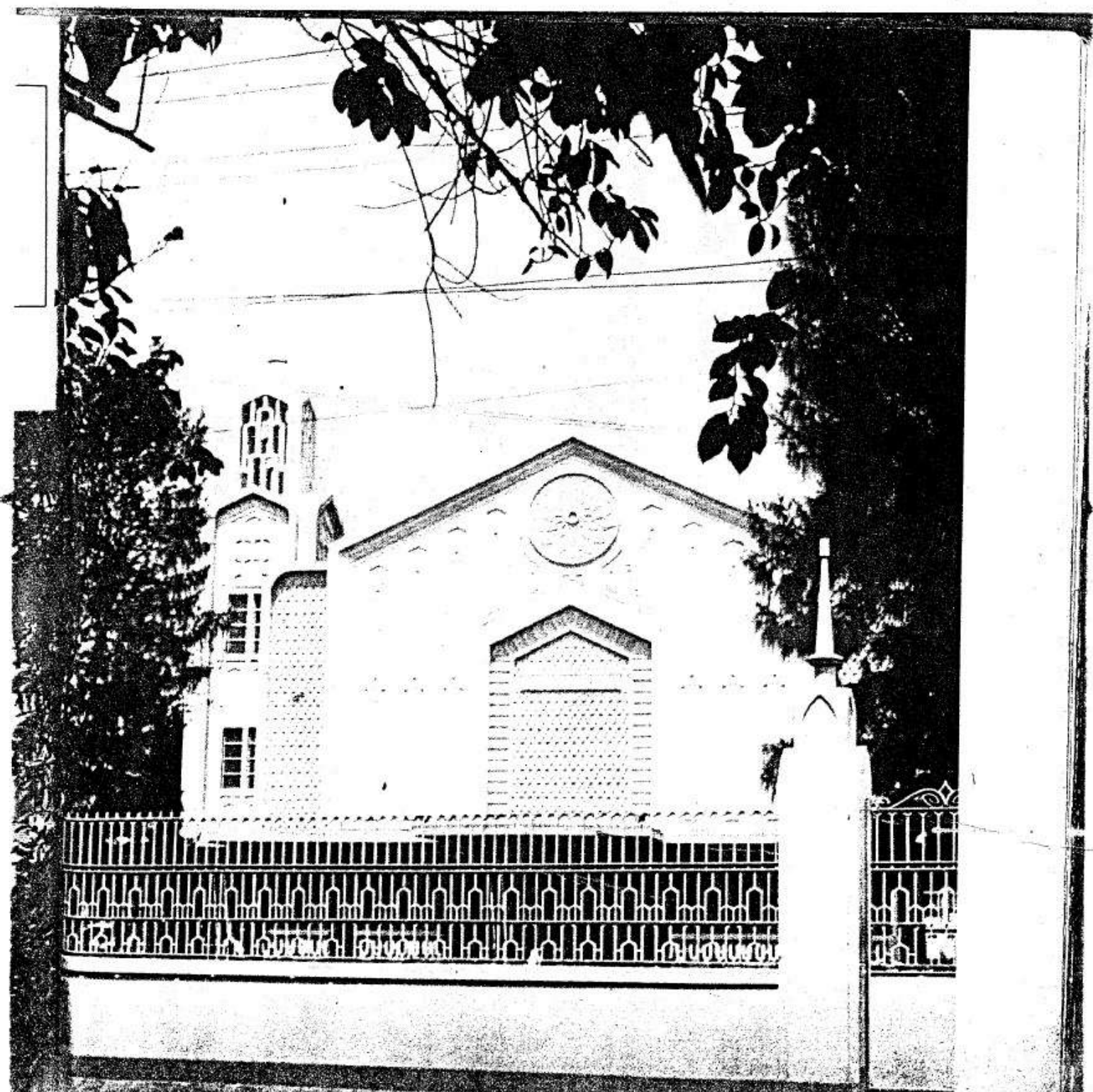
also in foreign lands where the Church's missionary activities have reached. These houses of worship draw attention from critics and admirers alike. Because evidently they cost millions of pesos.

It is the will of God that His people build houses of worship. In the Book of the prophet Haggai, Chapter 1, Verse 8, it is written: "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord." God commands; the Iglesia ni Cristo obeys.

The house of worship is the place designated by God where His people must go and worship Him and render the glory due His holy name (Psalms 5:7; 29:2). It is the appointed place where they should pray, supplicate and commune with God (Psalms 28:2). God's people are not free to choose the place of their liking to worship and pray to Him. God chooses the place where His people must seek Him; and that place is the house of worship wherein they shall make offerings and worship for God to accept (Dt. 12:13-14).

In pursuance to this will of God, the Church of Christ builds big houses of worship, notwithstanding the pungent criticism hurled by the cynics. For it is written: "The house which I am to build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods . . . to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the house I am to build will be great and wonderful" (II Chron. 2:5,9, RSV).





ON CONTRIBUTION

Contribution is one of the duties of every member of the Iglesia ni Cristo. Indeed it is a command written in the Bible that those who praise or worship God should "share what (they) have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." And this they should "not neglect" (Hebrews 13:15-16).

Yet contrary to the allegations of the Iglesia ni Cristo detractors, no quota, no fixed amount is imposed upon the members. For it is written: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).

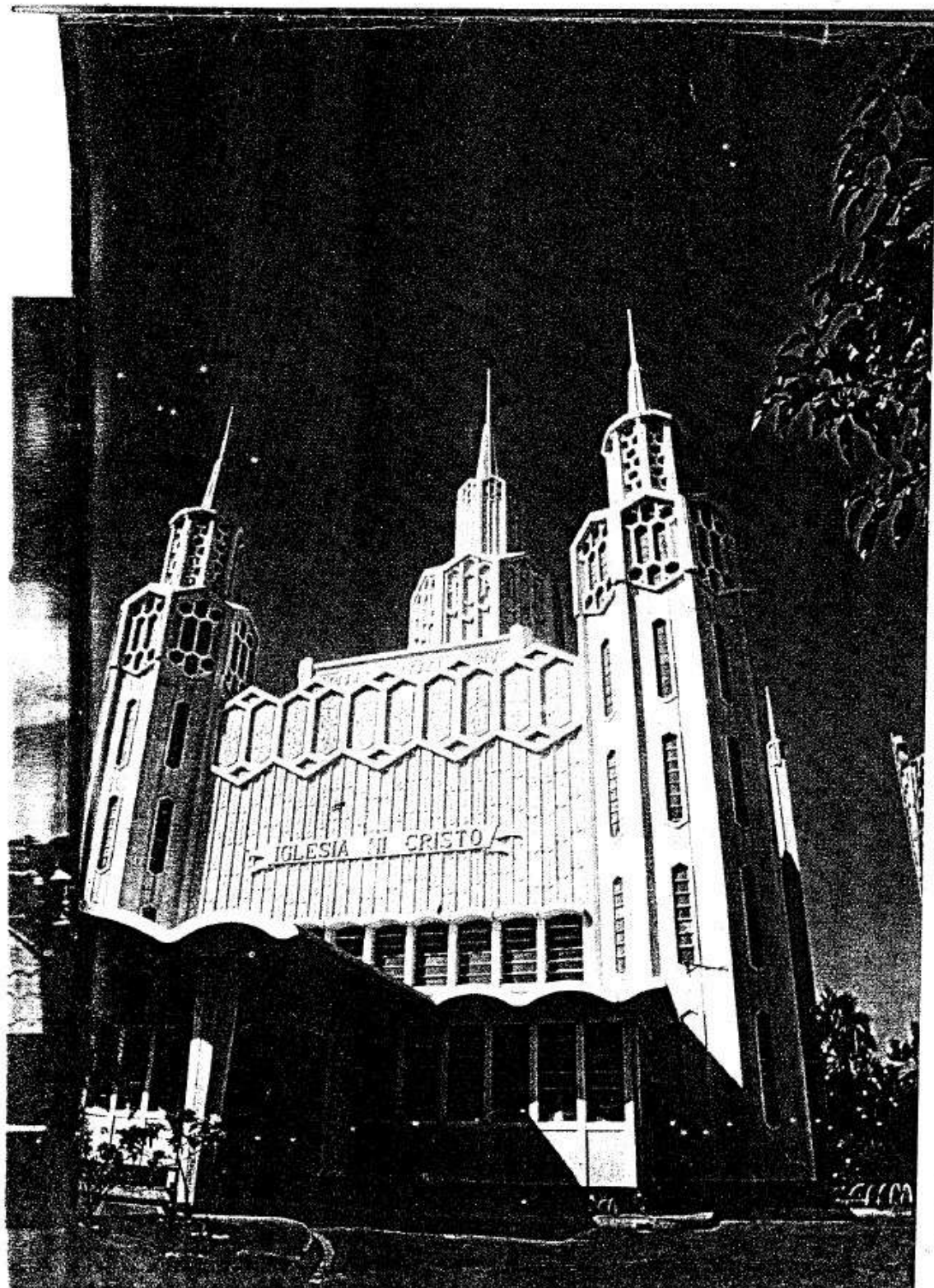
Contribution in the Iglesia ni Cristo is not a random act nor the result of an arbitrary decision as to how much to contribute. That is why Apostle Paul exhorts the members of the Church of Christ to prepare the offering beforehand, "so that it may be ready not as an exaction but as a willing gift" (II Cor. 9:5, RSV).

The Iglesia ni Cristo members, therefore, prepare their contribution according to the instructions of the Bible: "Now concerning the contribution for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper," or "according to the blessing of the Lord." (I Cor. 16:1-2; Dt., 16:17, RSV).

This is a burden or obligation of each one. So "let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches." (Gal. 6:5-6, RSV). It is sharing in the teaching of the Gospel.

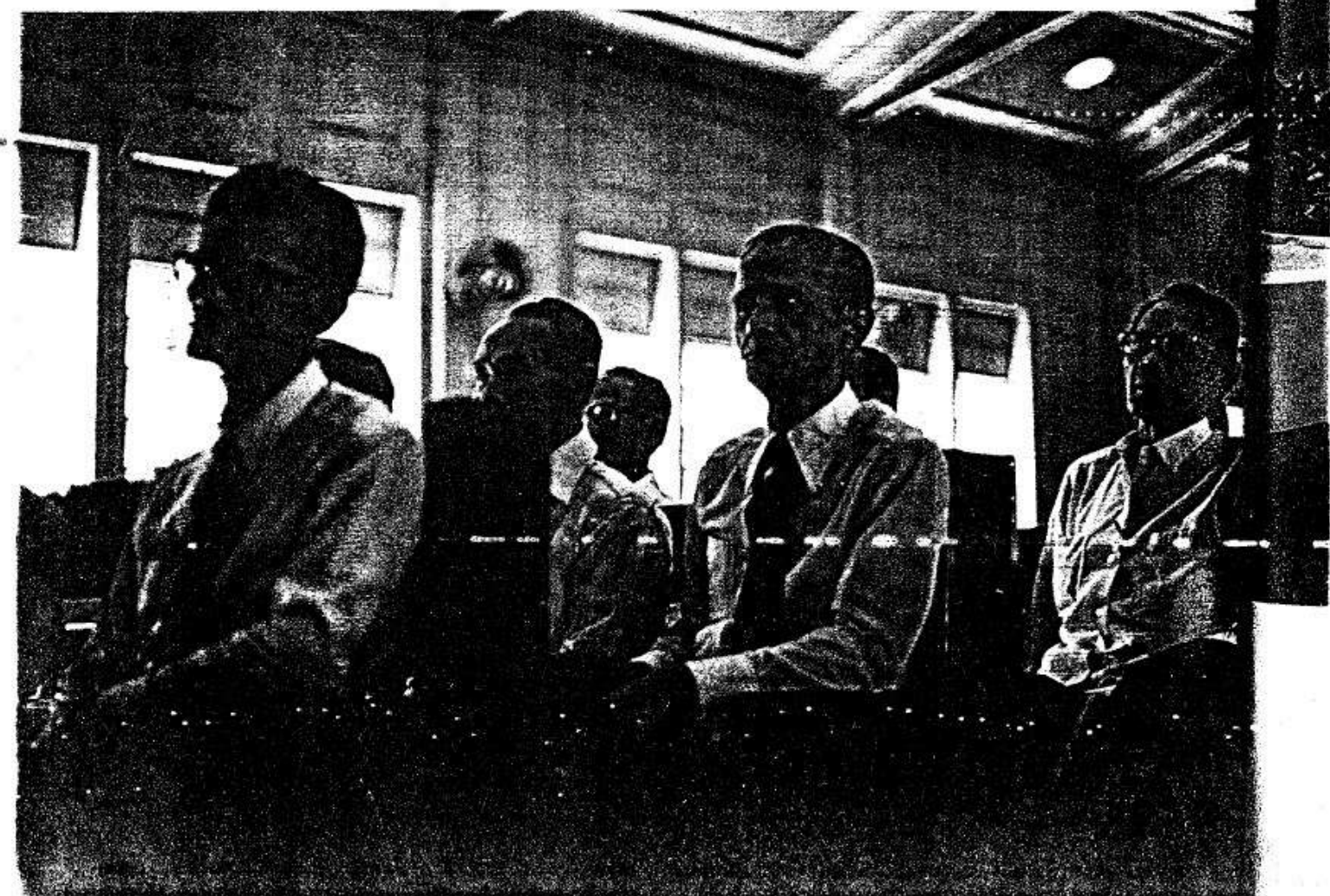
Such contributions in the Iglesia ni Cristo are spent on the administration of the Church, propagation of the Gospel and construction of houses of worship for the glory of God.

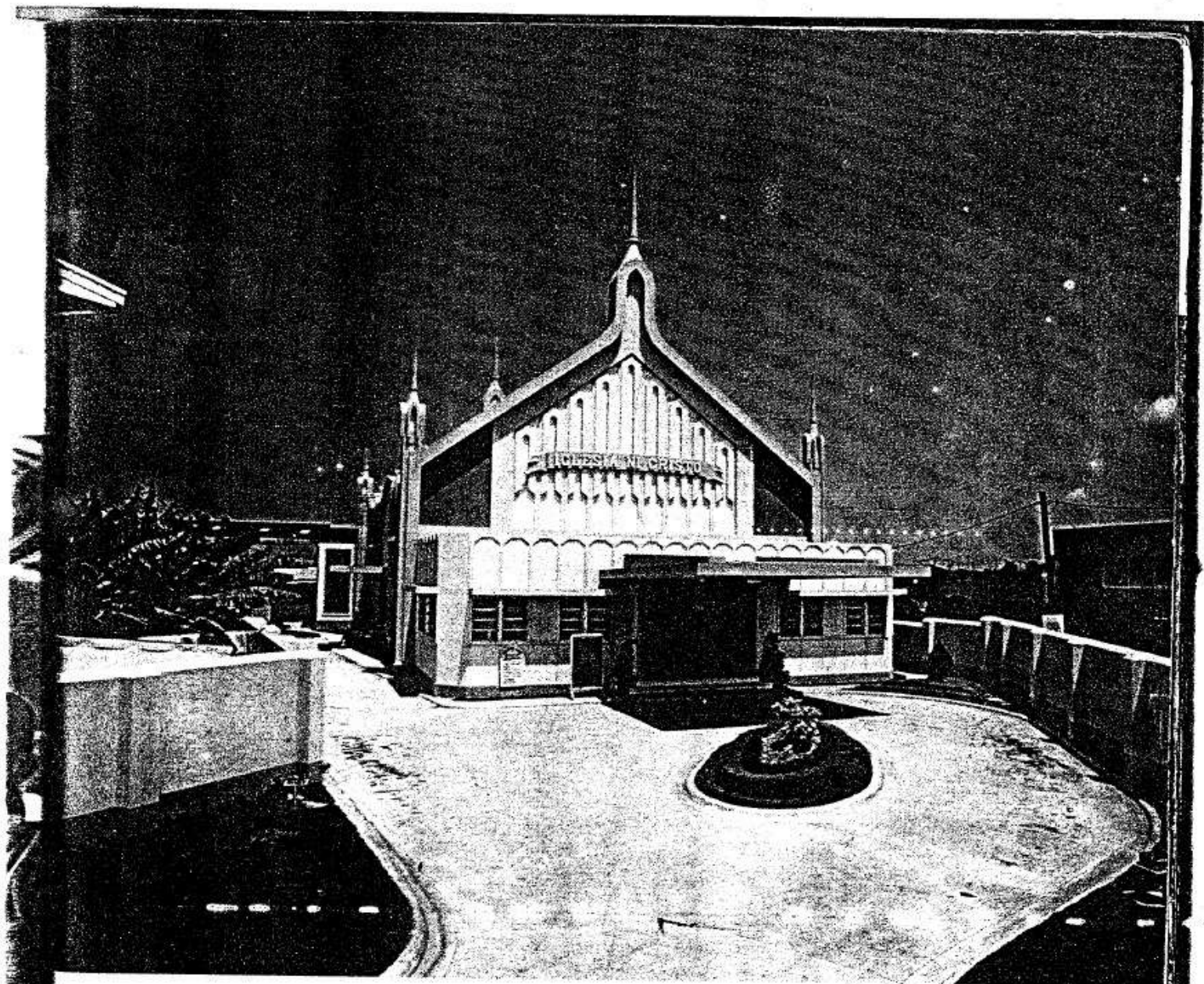
There is indeed no cause for regret with the giver because after all what he gives comes from God (I Chronicles 29:11-12).



Malabon, Rizal

A few male brethren during an Iglesia ni Cristo worship.





Balintawak,
Quezon City

ON UNITY

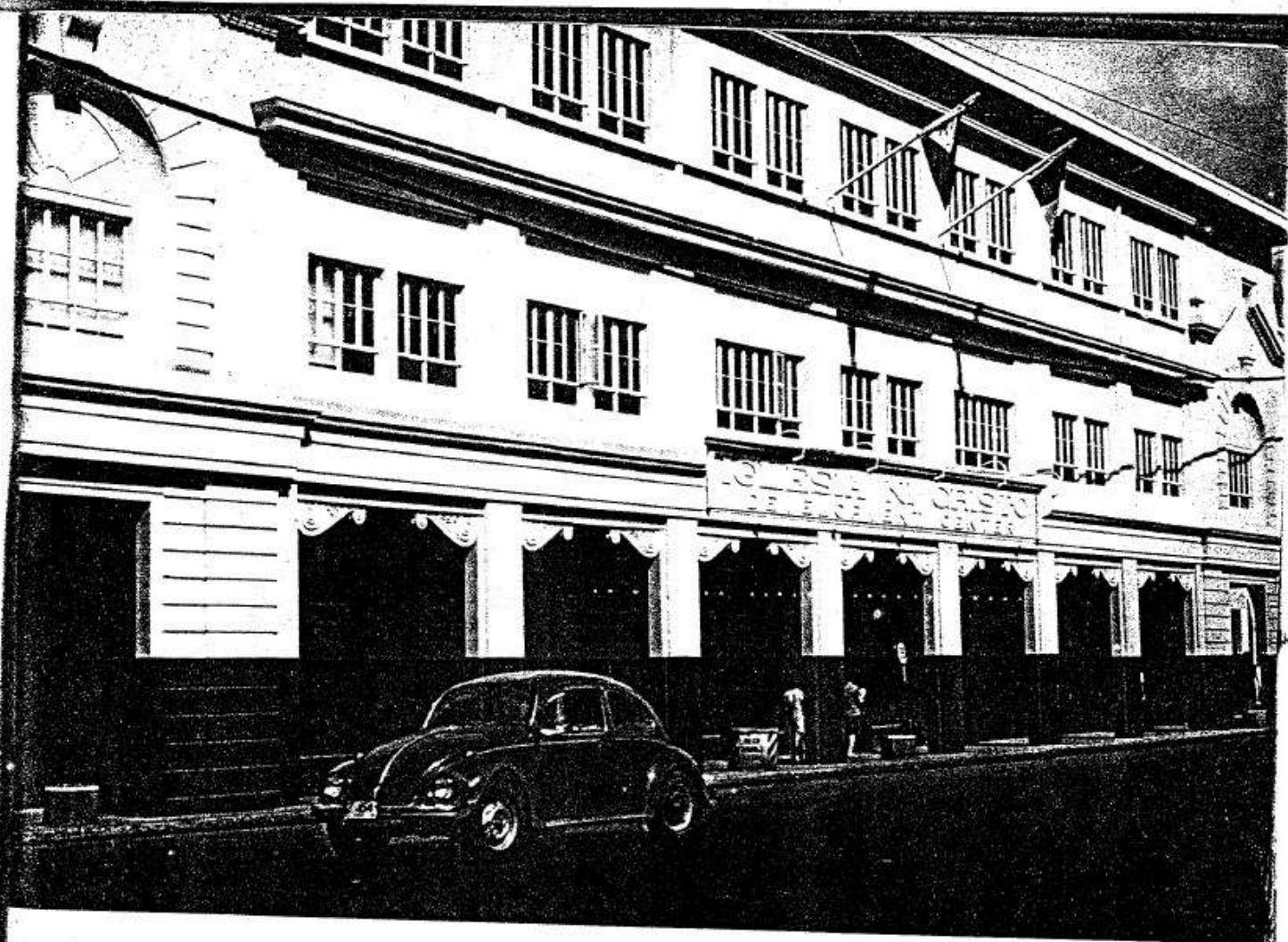
The members of the Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ) believe and practice the doctrine of God written in the Bible regarding the unity of Christians or the followers of Christ.

When Christ was "no more in the world" He prayed to God that those whom God had given Him "be one" (John 17:11). He taught this spirit of unity to His Apostles. And so firmly did they adhere to it that even when Christ was already in heaven the Church members obeyed the final decision of the Church Administration, as, for instance, when they followed the sentence passed by James the Apostle over a controversial issue in the Church (Acts 15:12-13, 19). They did that for unity. Because unity or fellowship with the Church Administration is unity or union with God and with His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So whenever the members receive any

circular from the Church Administration on matters of faith and policy upheld by the Church "they rejoiced for the consolation" (Acts 15:31). They rally to it "as one man." Whether it is building a temple or house of worship, fighting the enemies of their faith, electing government officials, and in all matters of their faith, they are "united in the same mind and the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10, RSV). There are no dissensions. For if there would be, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13, RSV). Dissension or strife does not come from above, "but is earthly, unspiritual devilish" (James 3:14-15, RSV).

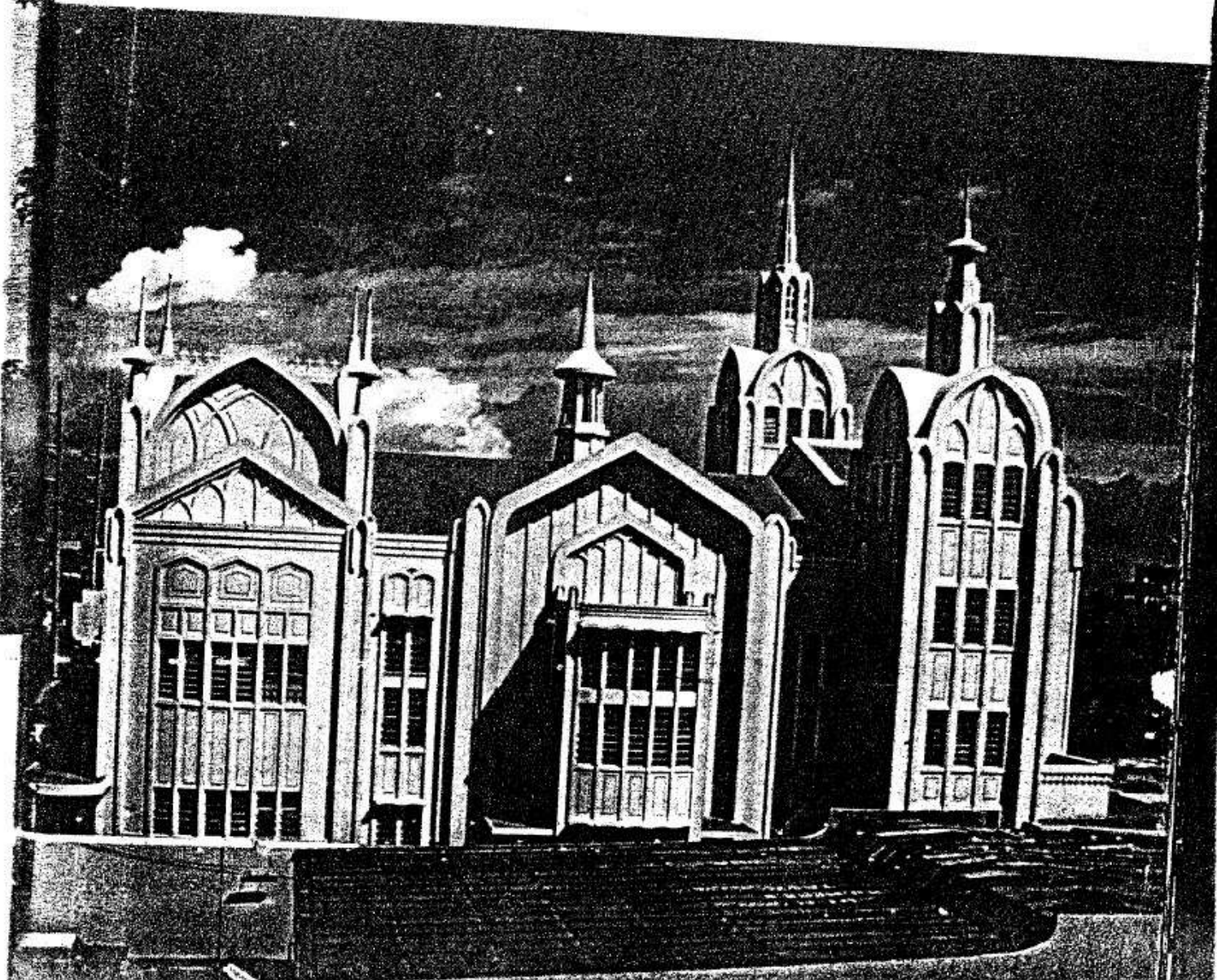
The members function as one man: like a body whose parts function in perfect unison, complimenting each other, helping each other and working in harmony towards the ultimate good of the whole body. As it is written: "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Psalms 133:1 RSV).



Bacoor, Cavite

The facade of Iglesia ni Cristo development Center at C. Palanca St., Quiapo, Manila which houses the New Era Evangelical College, the New Era Educational Institute, and the New Era Training Center.

Paco, Manila



ON IMAGE WORSHIP

In Romans 1:21, we are told that there are people who know God but do not glorify Him as God and are not thankful to Him. Instead, they glorify and thank the images made like mortal man, birds, four-footed beasts and creeping things.

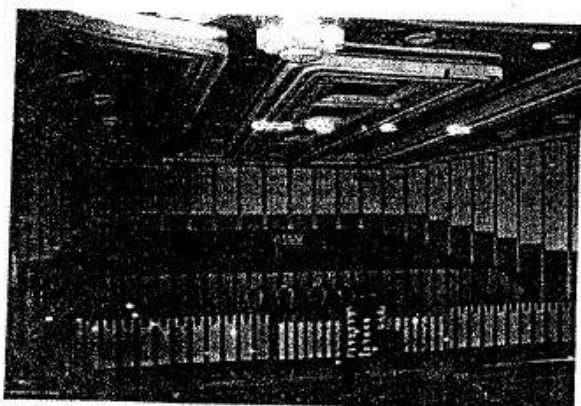
Roman Catholics, according to Catholic doctrine, worship not only the person of the saints but also the relics and images of the saints (The Catechism of Christian Doctrine No. 3, p.87). They celebrate feasts in honors of their so-called patron saints whose images

they carry during processions worshiping them, glorifying them and deifying them like the idolatric people that they really are.

On account of this ungodly worship of images, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven. God gave people over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness and all evils of this world (Romans 1:28-29).

The worship of images is a sin against God. It is a transgression of the law of God which prohibits man from having other Gods before Him and from making graven images which man should neither bow himself down to nor serve (Ex. 20:3-5). This law which He handed down to the Israelites since the Mosaic times is binding also upon Christians.

Apostle Paul taught the Christians that an idol or image "is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one" (1 Cor. 8:4). He admonished us to separate ourselves from the idols or images for they are unclean things which Christians should not touch (11 Cor. 6:17).



ON JUDGMENT DAY

Despite many a scoffer's disbelief, the Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ) believes as a sure reality that the world will come to its end. There will be a Day of Judgment, a day of the Lord.

On that day, Apostle Peter says, "the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up" (II Pet. 3:10, RSV).

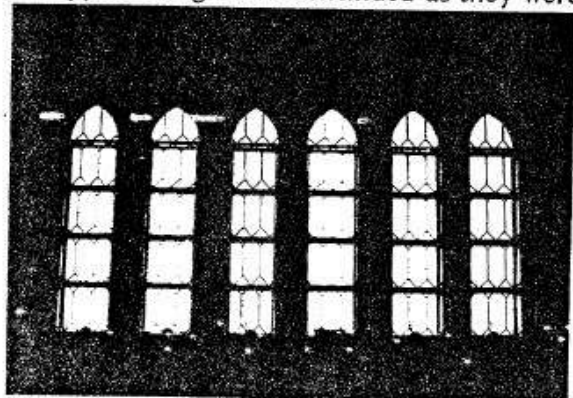
This is what the scoffers do not believe reasoning out that "ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were

from the beginning of creation" (II Pet. 3:4, RSV).

What the scoffers deliberately ignore is the fact that the world existed by the word of God, that by the same word, the then existing world was deluged and all living creatures perished, except Noah and all that were with him in the ark. By the same word this world is kept until the day of judgment (II Pet. 3:5-7).

As a matter of fact, even at the time of Enoch, a patriarch, the Day of Judgment was prophesied (Jude 1:14-15). In the prophetic dispensation, the prophet Zephaniah said that the "great day of the Lord is near." And he described the advent of that day with the same dreadful scene as presented by Apostle Peter — the world will end up with fire, and there will be no escape. The mighty man cries aloud there. "Neither their silver and their gold," the Prophet Zephaniah foretold, "shall be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of the Lord" (Zeph. 1:14-18, RSV).

Evidently, Judgment Day is foremost of the doctrines of the Bible. Since the time of the patriarch, the prophets, and up to the Christian dispensation, it has been predicted.



EATING OF BLOOD: FORBIDDEN

God's ban on eating blood can be traced back to the time of the Patriarchs. In Noah's time, God did not give man the freedom to eat anything. Although He gave Noah and his descendants the control of every beast on earth, of the fowls of the air, fishes of the sea and the green herbs for their sustenance, God warned them against eating blood. As it is written: "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" (Gen. 9:4).

Similarly, the Israelites were prohibited from eating blood. In Deuteronomy 12:15-16, it is written: "However, you may slaughter and eat flesh within any of your towns, as much as you desire, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which he has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the hart. Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water" (RSV).

This prohibition transcends even to the

Christian era, as it is articulated in Acts 15:28-29: "For it is the will of the Holy Spirit and of us to lay upon you no additional burden than these necessary things: That you abstain from sacrifices offered to idols and from blood and from animals strangled and from fornication" (Lamsa Version).

The blood of birds and beasts was given to make atonement for the souls (Lev. 17:11). It is but a shadow of the good things to come (Heb. 10:1). For it symbolizes the blood of Christ "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14, RSV).

This is why members of the Iglesia ni Cristo are prohibited from eating blood under pain of excommunication. And not without basis. To the Israelites, God's warning is written in Leviticus 17:10: "I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people."

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

To redeem the members of His Church (i.e., the parts of the Body of the one new man He created) Christ, being their Head, died for them. He died on the cross, was buried, was resurrected by God on the third day, and after forty days He was gloriously taken up into heaven.

What does that prove? Apostle Paul said, "Now if what we preach about Christ is that he was raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no such thing as a resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ was not raised . . ." (1 Cor. 15:12-13, Goodspeed).

The resurrection of the Lord Christ dispels or should dispel all doubts regarding the resurrection of the dead and the life hereafter. It is written, "For since it was through a man (Adam) that we have death, it is through a man also (Christ) that we have the raising of the dead. For just as because of their relation to Adam all men die, so because of their relation

to Christ they will all be brought to life again" (1 Cor. 15:21-22, Goodspeed).

Man should therefore pray to God that he be resurrected from the dead and be brought up again from the depths of the earth (Ps. 71:20).

But there are two kinds of resurrection from the dead, namely, the resurrection to life everlasting and the resurrection to everlasting reproach. "Blessed and holy is the man who experiences the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them. . . ." (Rev. 20:6, Goodspeed). They are those who died as members of the Church of Christ and since they are Christ's they will experience the first resurrection for "the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Th. 4:16).

Then shall come to pass that which is written, "I will build my Church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it." (Mt. 16:18, RSV).

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO

"The most telling argument that the (Catholic) Church is a failure is the Iglesia ni Cristo, which has given the common man that sense of social justice and moral order which an impersonal, rich Church (Catholic) has not been able to give. The Catholic Church should learn from the dynamics of the INC (Iglesia ni Cristo)."

— Vitaliano R. Gorospe, S.J.
*Philippine National Problems
and Development*

"Yet it cannot be denied that the Iglesia (ni Cristo) is a large, powerful and expanding organization. It may well constitute the most vital and aggressive threat which the Catholic Church faces in the islands at the present time. It is most certainly a force to be reckoned with now and in the years to come by anyone interested in the religious welfare of the Filipino people."

— Joseph J. Kavanagh, S.J.
Philippine Studies (a quarterly)

"Today religious sects are flourishing in the Philippines. One of the most formidable of these is that founded by Felix Manalo in 1914 and officially designated as the Iglesia ni Cristo Many of its members come from Protestant churches. Manalo is a dynamic leader who has demonstrated unusual ability in influencing people in building up a strong organization. His churches are found not only in Luzon but also in the Visayas and Mindanao."

— Albert Sanders
*A Protestant View of the
Iglesia ni Cristo*

"... the fastest growing religious movement in the Philippines."

— *Studies in Philippine Church History*
Edited by Gerald H. Anderson

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Salinas Congregation
221 California Street
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2145 E. 8th St., National City
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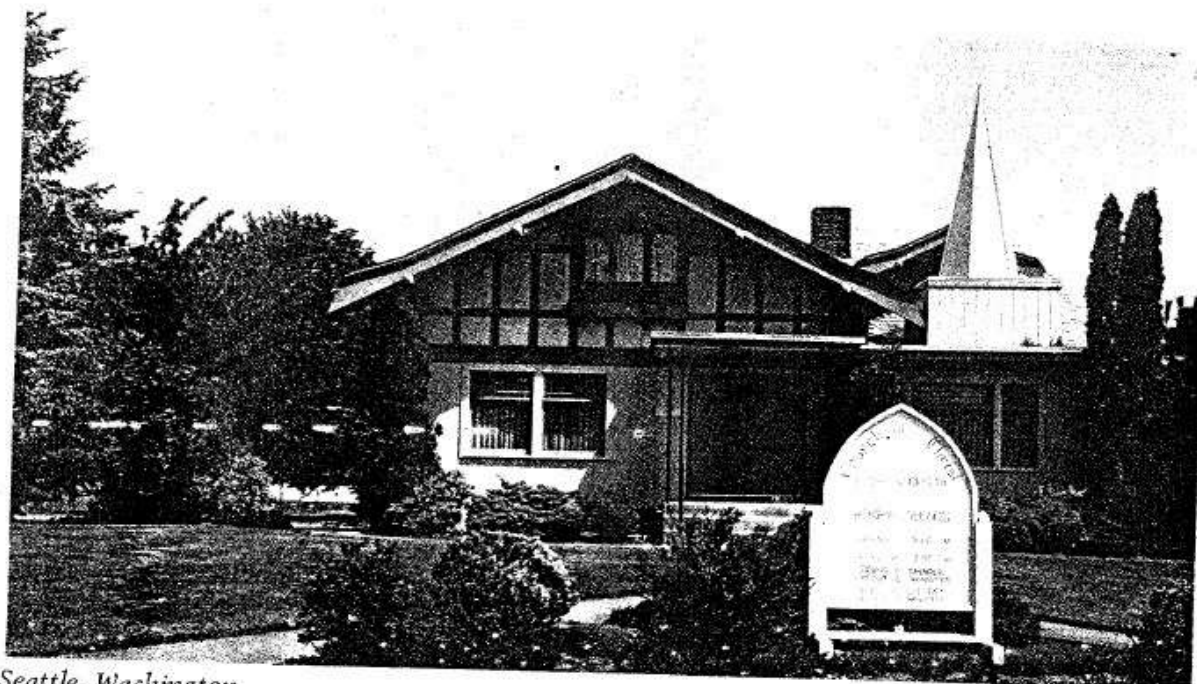
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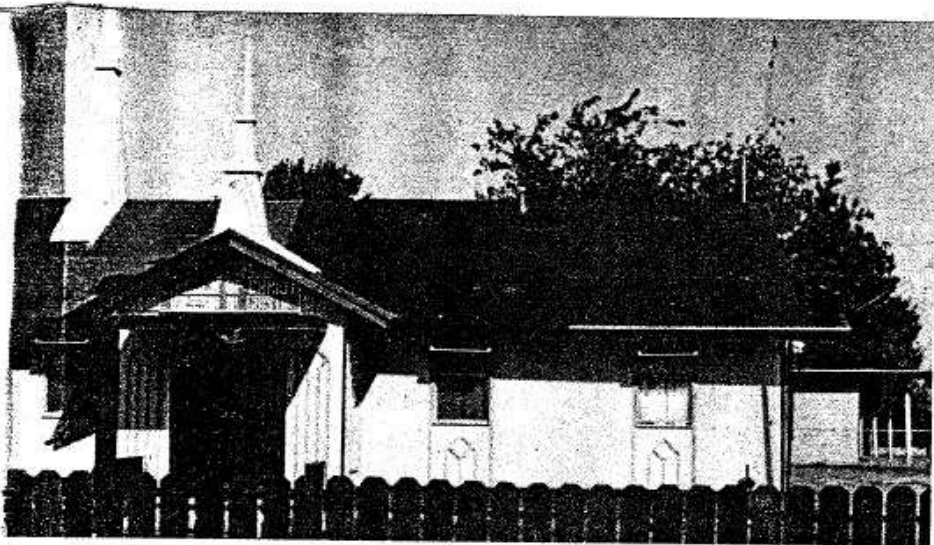
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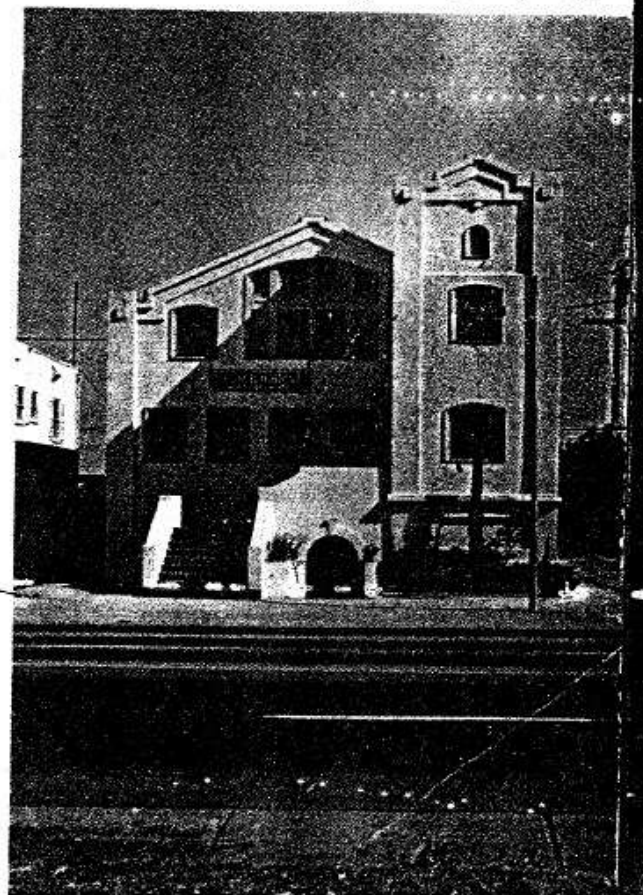
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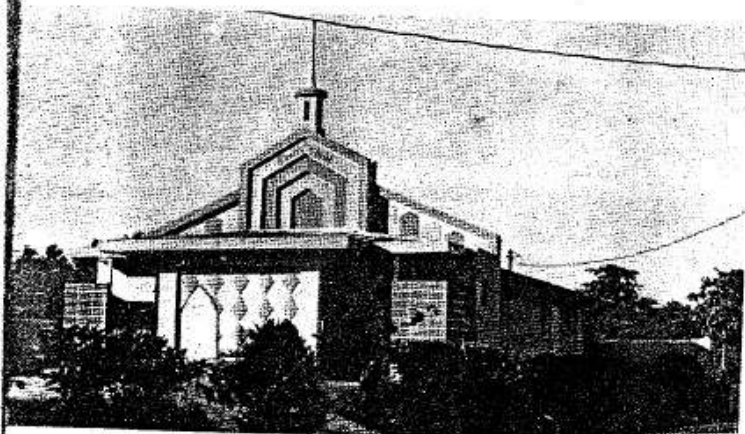
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